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Criticism and Analysis of the Political Statement of the George Jackson Brigade from the Anarchist Angle

Carl Harp

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1970s?

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This was written by Carl Harp just before he was murdered by the State. Edited by John H. Bosch and Anarchist Black Dragon Collective in Walla Walla, Washington State Penitentiary. Printed in England by Friends of Doug Wakefield C/0 14, Warren Road, Leyton, London E 10. through which address you can contact John H. Bosch and A.B.D. Collective (or almost any Anarchist in the U.K.)

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1970s?

spectator sport, but requires the combined efforts of everyone to succeed. Two, that if we all do not become involved, our efforts are nothing and the revolution will fail.

THE POWER OF MIR PEOPLE LIES IN THE PEOPLE, NOT IN THEIR SOCIAL STRUCTURES. love and rage, A.B.D. Collective. Walla Walla.

**Marxist-Leninist are
Bolsheviks. Just after
the Russian Revolution
the Bolsheviks changed
their name to
Communist and
accepted Marxism (as
interpreted by
Lenin and
Company.) as their
theory. They have been
attempting to practise it
ever since. It is our
opinion that
Marxism-Leninism is a
gross distortion of
Marxist thought leading
only to State Capitalism
under Totalitarian rule.**

POINT OF VIEW. - OURS.

Over the last decade a great amount of change has swept the country and the consequences of these changes are with us today. But the nature of change (The original concept of chaos) is such that we realise that the "concrete facts" today are only the dust motes of tomorrow.

As anarchists, we are concerned with all things that threaten the free will of all people. We are interested in the health of our children, the safety of our families, and the welfare of ourselves and our friends. We are the people who decide for themselves our destiny and accept no man or system as our master.

In the following pages we have attempted to put into words our feelings in regards to revolution and concerning, specifically, the *Political Statement of the George Jackson Brigade*. (Nov. '77.)

We presume that there will be elements from all classes in society that disagree with something in our dissertation. It appears also that some points will be accepted and some rejected, possibly even some ignored. This is entirely up to the reader. We do not ask you to accept our claims on face value alone. We expect that, like all intelligent and interested people, you will weigh the points printed here, research further the subjects contained, and reach reasonable conclusions on your own. After all, whether you are a revolutionary, an apolitical worker, or a member of the ruling class, the revolution, whether you admit it or not, concerns you. You are already involved.

Some of the areas of discussion will contain two or more slightly different outlooks. Since we, as anarchists, are very prone to safeguarding our individuality, we do indeed have differences of opinion. We have found, however, that these differences do not in any way shape or form get in the way of our working together or enjoying the gift of life. These differences enhance our work and lives each day.

Some of us are anarchists because we are political. Some of us are anarchists because we are not political. Some of us are religious, some are not. But if there was a God or force that we could all acknowledge at once, it would be chaos, the ancient divinity governing the eternal law of change. Not the earth destroying soul soaring holocaust that some portray chaos to be, but the unending play of universal growth throughout the cosmos. A seed does not become a tree until it sheds its shell. Likewise a human being cannot hope to realise his full potential unless he is allowed to grow as these universal laws dictate. If one man forces another into a mold that man is not meant to fill, the loss belongs to all of us.

IN THE BEGINNING.

We can see by this opening statement (accepting the eulogy to Bruce Seidal as a dedication.) that the origins of the George Jackson Brigade lie in the theories of communism. From the start they operated on the principles and examples of this theory of a society "ruled by the working class." To prove their liberality they recite a roll call of activities and structure - "50% women...at least half the women are lesbians...Leadership and decision making comes from the women...50% of the planning and participation ...women."

Who cares? Are we fighting a revolution or accepting nonviolence for "Man of the year"? Does it matter what sex a fighter is? Does it matter what sexual preference he or she enjoys? We are engaged in a revolution. Revolution is a fight to the death for life, freedom, and recognition of our common humanity. In a time of revolution it matters very little whether you are a man or a woman, what colour your skin is or who or what you go to bed with. These observations by the Brigade are irrelevant, useless, detract from the mission of disseminating propaganda (as the Statement is said to be), and a cheap

pat on their own backs. However, in all fairness, some of us fool that this is not the attitude or idea the Brigade is trying to express here. These people fool that the idea being presented here is that all people have the potential to be revolutionaries* but that this is overlooked by many others because of their own prejudices. If this is indeed the case, we hope that further communications will be more specific. A***** POOTS 0? UNITY. As a means of cementing solidarity among its non-pars, the 8 Points of Unity is not a bad grouping of ideas. We cannot find too much fault with most of the points. However, there is an area or two that causes us to wonder just the tiniest bit if maybe we are being fed a line of crap. Point 4 claims that the foundation of class society is sexism. There is no explanation given for such a line of reasoning. Try as we might, we couldn't find one either. There is no basis for such a claim. In the early days of social order the primary concern was survival. There was not enough room in the group for ideology such as sexism, racism, or anything else that would hamper the fight for survival. Society had a need to reach a higher level of development before this foolishness could spring forth. Sexism is an offshoot of the old idea of women as chattels, (property.) As property has no individualism or importance outside of its uses to the owner, women were simply to be considered as means to increase the wealth of the husband/owner. Homosexuality, since it does not increase the property, in the guise of children, has been condemned by Church and State in most civilisations used as examples in today's social studies classes. Once again the concept of ownership raises its head. Cities throughout history have been regarded by the State as property. Points 4 and 5 further claim that sexism and racism are major tools of ruling class oppression. Good point. The old divide and conquer rule still works in these days of modern technology. Call us continental if you like, but this brand of D and C shows that good old fashioned techniques can still work their old magic today. . The only real problem here is the general accusation

nade against each and every human being on the face of the Earth ...”(racism,soxisn) must bo smashed in each one of us.” It would appear that tho Brigade feels that everyone is a bigot. Tho fault in this line of thinking is the attitude that frames the thought. It should be obvious to all of us that not everyone is suffering from those delusions. Some of us are not sexist, some are not racist. Thanks,but no thanks. Each person is free to pick and choose their own brand of guilt. Dont pedal your personal problems and rationalise them in this manner. We aint buying it. THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. This STATEMENT refers to ”the dictatorship of tho proletariat” several times. It is defined as the belief in a ”government of the people, by the people and for the people.” It revolves around the belief that it is the people who know what the people want. Thus far tho definition is true. Difficulty arises when tho terns ”dictatorship” and ”proletariat” are defined. Lets look at these words a moment. WEBSTER’S NEW TWENTIETH CENTURY DICTIONARY(Collins World, 1977) states that”proletariat” means: (1) the class of lowest status in ancient Roman society. (2) the class of lowest status in any society or community.(rare) (J) the working class{especially the industrial working classjthe current sense,as in Marxism.

We oan dispense with the first two as the Brigade claims Marxist tendencies. We will accept(once) their definition of themselves. ”Dictatorship is defined by the sane source, as :

1. the position or office of a dictator;
2. the term of dictator’s office; J. a dictatorial government ; a state ruled a dictator;
4. absolute power or authority. We oan again ignore definitions 1 and 2 since they deal with an office or length of tine. That leaves us with J or 4 - both of which are in harnony in modern social order. Therefore, the phrase ”dictatorship of the proletariat” is simply: ”A dictatorial

nist from time to time, but we will never allow them behind us.

*

and/or smothered in, sugar coated BULLSHIT. When one analyses it, the sugar coating disappears in the clear air of reason and the smelly concoction inside is revealed. People who throw stones shouldn't live in glass houses. The communists, in the final analysis, show themselves in their true colours. They are nothing but a bunch of self-serving opportunists who wish only to replace the present bureaucratic structure with their own. They do not wish to replace or eliminate the police, military, or industrial machinery. They plan only to replace the old masters, and keep the existing structure intact. They will thus become the new masters. We are fighting a revolution now to rid ourselves of people who operate under the same corporate-type machinery as the communists. If we want the same type of structure after the revolution as we have now, why should we fight and die to replace it in the first place? Freedom is too precious to give away once we have gained it. Why let those in power, new or old, set up newer and stronger chains than the ones we have just cast off? If the system is the same, it will suffer the same ills as the old one. The wonderful sounding phrases of the Communists are thus exposed to sham. These opportunist# will attempt to run the revolution at every opportunity. As long as they fight and die for the people they serve the people, but History shows us that they seize the reins of power immediately after the revolution by the same methods they employed to seize the revolution and its fighting units. As long as they fight and die, the people are served by them. But if they fight and live the revolution is only half completed. An enemy that is obvious is vulnerable. An enemy that succeeds in deluding us with fine sounding words is - threat until it is recognised and defeated. It is a greater threat than the first because it stalks us deceives us as to its intentions and is secretive as to its full purpose. The communists are, therefore, a far greater threat to us than the present system. ONE LAST WORD. We may, as lovers of freedom, fight beside the commu-

government of absolute authority resting in the hands of the industrial working class." It appears that since not all people are industrial workers, this definition would result in one of two things. A new breed of oppressors or a new Monocracy" - the oppression of the minority. Oppression is oppression, no matter who is doing it. Why trade old chains for new? Albert Jay Nock, in OUR ENEMY THE STATE, shows the illogic of this social order. "A proletarian State would merely, like the merchant-State shift the incident of exploitation, and there is no historical ground for the presumption that a collectivist State would be in any essential respect unlike its predecessors; as we are beginning to see, "the Russian experiment* has amounted to the erection of a highly-centralised bureaucratic State upon the ruins of another, leaving the entire apparatus of exploitation intact and ready for use." On the other hand, if we accept the idea that this would result in everyone being able to reap the benefits of a new social order without new chains, we are all for it. Surprise, surprise, the only system that operates on those terms is Anarchy. Isn't that what we all want - self rule? If we read the whole STATEMENT we find such gems as : "...many honest revolutionaries do not yet recognise their responsibility to support the armed struggle." Responsibility is ACCEPTED by the individual; it cannot be forced upon him. To the M-L's would force it upon all. • ..their responsibility to provide leadership..." Not only would they have you believe that responsibility can be forced on those that don't want it, but they would also force the concept of leadership down our throats. Leaders are recognised by the people. That is the determination of leadership. If we must, as the communists claim, wait on the will of the people, then we must wait until the people decide who they will be led by. If we force

them to accept a leadership they do not want, then we become the enemy. One of the prime examples of a leader who was not accepted at the time he attempted to lead was Che Guevara. In his last campaign he was unable to raise much support because the people would not accept him as a leader in a revolution they didn't accept. He was alone, out of proper supply lines, and ultimately killed. Perhaps if he had waited for the people to ask for help he would be alive today. THE LEFT. We move on now to the attitudes of the left as defined by the Brigade and we shall then see a great mass of contradiction, undeserved innuendo, and more commands given us by the Brigade. "For the most part, the organised left in Seattle has ignored us. Our experience with them has led us to become somewhat cynical about them, so their behaviour hasn't bothered us too much. At the same time, we recognise the important contributions made by those few independent segments of the left, and the ordinary people, who have supported us." By approaching this statement from all angles and studying it in all its aspects, it appears that they want to hear from you, you poor ordinary people, as long as you agree with them. If you don't, you're shirking your responsibility. That makes you, the ordinary people, part of the problem* That makes you, the ordinary people, the enemy. That makes you, the ordinary people expendable. It also displays an attitude of superiority felt by our gracious lords and leaders. If we, or anyone, are ordinary people

then there must be somewhere some extraordinary people. Beware that "superior" people. WHO ARE THEY? Ask the communists. It should be apparent by this time that they will gladly "recognise their responsibilities" and lead us on the path to true enlightenment. We can hear the rattle of those chains again. Af-

Communist countries and Communist organisations between "the people" and the power mongers? Why do they claim that a classless society cannot be achieved through revolution, and at the same time they urge us all to overthrow our present social order to achieve one.?

The (Mt question# can be asked about their attitudes to the State. The answers to both questions are the same and they are obvious as hell. They want the revolution to succeed so that they may grab the reins of power (government) of a strong unit (centralist) and work for "the people (dictatorship.) They will do what they can to help and serve "the people" - as long as they are "the people" being served. How on to the final contradiction that we wish to cover in this critique. "Marxist-Leninism is a SCIENCE that analyses reality as it exists, and which CHANGES as historical reality changes. Marxism-Leninism is the most thorough analysis of concrete conditions, " There is such an obvious contradiction here that it is surprising it wasn't caught earlier. They first speak of change and then define change as a "concrete condition" governed by concrete laws - NO WAY. Change MIGHT be defined as a concrete condition if we accept the idea that the only condition of existence is change. Then, and only then, could it be so. Static is a more correct term than concrete. History shows that changing societies continue, static ones die. As society changes constantly, we may assume that the laws governing society must also change constantly. Since by scientific analysis it would take some time to determine and implement them, they would, or very well could be, obsolete. There are no "concrete conditions" that dictate change. Change, by its very nature, is a fluid condition and must be observed as such. Any concerted effort by a human race along a single path is doomed to failure from the start. An exercise of this nature can only MODIFY existing conditions and result in either a greater or more violent change. 'Nuff said. This whole section of the STATEMENT by the Brigade, is contradictory

communists. What they are saying is: "We won the revolution. Now we lost it. Boo-hoo. Now what?" Simple enough. FIGHT ANOTHER DAMNED REVOLUTION. Since these groups are exploiting the people they have become the enemy. Our job is obvious, and since they are non-centralised, they are weaker than the former oppressors. Fight. Richardo Flores Magon, in his book LAND AND LIBERTY, states: "No one can foretell the lengths to which the impending revolution's task of recovery will go; but, if we fighters undertake in good faith the helping it as far as possible along the road) if, when we pick up the Winchester, we go forth decided not to elevate to power another master but to redress the proletariat's rights; if we take the field pledged to conquer that economic liberty which is the foundation on which all liberties rest, and the condition without which no liberties can exist; if we make this our purpose, we shall start it on a road worthy of this epoch. But if we are carried away by the desire for easy triumph; if, seeking to make the struggle shorter, we desert our own radicalism and aims, so incompatible with those of the purely bourgeois and conservative parties then we shall have done only the work of the bandits and assassins; for the blood spilled will serve merely to increase the power of the bourgeoisie and the caste that today possesses wealth, and after the triumph, that caste will fasten anew on the proletariat's own blood, its own sacrifices, its own martyrdom, which will have conquered power for the bourgeoisie. The comment is made that Anarchism is not new. So what? Is "new" better? Does "old" mean bad? Think about it. The communists would also have you believe that the people do not know what they want. They say that each of us must strive to overcome our own personal feelings to "serve" the people. "The people" are individual units, each holding personal beliefs. If we all submerge our personal beliefs there will be no "will of the people". This is simply a ploy by these manipulators of "the people". They further define their goals as a "classless, stateless society". If this is true, then why is there such a division in

ter all this they would have you believe that they are interested in your ideas and opinions! They urge you to state your opinions so that they can improve their tactics and expand their goals. But if we "don't accept our responsibilities", or if we are just "ordinary people", they don't want to hear it. They make their own decisions. They want to make ours. At the same time it appears to us contradictory to state that they want to hear from you and continue to contend that you cannot be trusted! If there is no contradiction here, contradictions do not exist at all. WEATHER At the risk of sounding like ones who deal in politics, everyone talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it. We have all seen the rise and fall of our favourite group of "mad bombers" and the Weather Underground Organisation has been counted among them. Back when everyone else was talking about revolution, they ACTED. They scared hell out of the ruling class long before it was "fashionable" to do so. We fool that some of the criticism levelled against them is unfair. Dope dealing, for instance. (When we speak of dope here and later, let it be understood that we do not condone the sale or use of addictive drugs, but that we are speaking of pleasure producing herbs with uses in medical, philosophical, and/or religious areas) While it is true that dealing itself may not be a revolutionary activity, it supports the wishes of a large segment of the population and is therefore an act of rebellion. The money made by dealing can then be used by the rebels to arm themselves and acquire other much needed supplies. * Since a person can get lost time in prison and not take the same chances of capture as can be suffered in bank robberies and/or kidnapping, it is also a safer activity to engage in. Since the prevailing attitude among revolutionaries is that fitting and drugs don't mix (and since the police know this), it can be used as a cover by the revolutionary. A somewhat dubious cover to be sure, but quite satisfactory under certain conditions. Additionally, we must support the Brigade's stand on "turning yourself in to the police as revolutionary tactics." While the theory

of Jamming the machinery of government with our bodies is sound but in actual fact the sheer numbers needed to do this are unavailable. In addition, there is the consideration that we, by acting in this manner, are throwing ourselves on the mercy of what we claim is a corrupt system. If we acknowledge that the system is corrupt, how can we trust it to deal fairly with us? If we acknowledge the impossibility of fairness, why should we trust ourselves to beat - the system in its own legal network? As for the point raised about the lack of quality leadership in the WTO, we believe that that should be left to the discretion of the WTO. If its member's fool that the current leadership is not doing its job properly, then it is up to them to replace it with another they feel will do the job. If we believe in the right of the people to choose their own destinies, then we must believe in their right to accept the leadership and organisation they see fit to represent them. - - ♦♦♦♦♦* . THE POLICE This brings us to a subject near and dear to the hearts of us all. We all have our own pet attitudes and stories about police oppression, and most of us feel the world would be a better place to live in without our over present police State. But as far as we know, the George Jackson Brigade is the first group to approach the problem in such depth. While it is true that the Black Panthers talked about the situation, their main solution was to keep them out of the neighborhood. The Brigade claims, however, that the "police have no objective interest in maintaining capitalism, and they are not the enemy" But the police do profit directly from the system. They are, in the Brigade's own words, "...the most visible and oppressive arm of the ruling classes..." Without the ruling class - police would be out of work. They draw their pay, and hence their means of survival, from

5. the system. They need the same things that we need in order to survive. Therefore, without their pay they would be denied those necessities. So because they rely on the system for their pay,

another; there is no other source from which the State power can be drawn.

Therefore every assumption of State power, whether by gift or leisure, leaves society with so much less power) there is never, nor can be, any strengthening of State power without a corresponding and roughly equivalent depletion of social power."

It follows then, that the stronger the people are, the weaker the government will be. The weaker the government, the less chance of the people suffering from it. Therefore the weaker the government is, the more free the people are. Freedom is safeguarded by the lack of authority and not by the overabundance of it. Ah, but the communists want a strong centralist government, according to their STATEMENT. They say that this is the only way to guarantee freedom. "We will protect you, we will make the laws for you, we will fight for you. All you have to do is work' How wonderfully considerate they are! See how much they care! They will do all these marvelous things for us and all we have to do is work little fannies off to reverently serve their gallant efforts. By supporting them we are supporting the State that is going to do all these marvelous things for us. If the State does the fighting for us we don't need to fight. So we don't need guns. The State will keep them "for us". If any criminal has a gun to use against us (and by their laws, any civilian with a gun is a criminal), they will see that he is removed until he is "reeducated." ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SUPPORT THEM i

This is beginning to sound like we won the revolution only to replace one blood-crazed lion with another. Is this why we fought the damn thing in the first place? Federation guards against this. Won-centralised autonomous groups are harder to overpower. One falls and the rest are alerted. In a strong centralist structure there is only one way to regroup once the pieces fall. Then they try to blind us with foolish questions. The examples of the Black Flag Tractor factory and the Red Star locomotive company point out the conniving minds of the

of our operations. You can accomplish more because of our greater strength. Our different areas of work (armed struggle, security, intelligence, etc.) become easier because our resources are increased. You are then liable to suffer from the handicaps of increased security. Security must tighten up. You must be able to work with each other, yet remain invisible while doing it. But the tactic is good and must be accomplished if we are to survive as a capable fighting force. point J. - Development of a Rural Base - is self evident. You need a base with security that no "safe house" can provide. You need a base before our actions. Many brothers and sisters have been lost because of the lack of this type of environment. The only area of disagreement we find is: "You are anxious to work with/develop organisational ties with/talk with/whatever with - all these progressive people. You would agree with our eight points of unity." This sounds awfully close to the "fuck you - hurray for me" syndrome. However, since we are not completely sure of the exact meaning of this particular section of the Statement, we cannot offer anything on this subject at this time. There may be a thought we are missing or misreading, so we eagerly wait to be enlightened on this point. At this time we would like to mention that many times it has appeared to us and our associates that the Loft has a communications problem. You urge all engaged in revolution to please state clearly everything you communicate. Our cloudiness will be used by Mr. Man to disrupt our functions and weaken our position. TACTICS. Again, we find very little to criticise. These tactics have been around since the beginning of time and will remain the same no matter how many years pass or wars are fought. However, we fail to see how the George Jackson Brigade can take their stand that the masses must be followed as interpreted by the aboveground Left when they have already condemned them for being indifferent, passive, or antagonistic. On tactical principles we seem to disagree again, but it is only a difference of opinion perhaps. Propaganda (which enludes counter-

propaganda.) is as important as work that has a solid, readily apparent material effect.

They are so interrelated that to place one above the other is ridiculous. What good are the actions if the people don't know about them or the reasons behind them? Propaganda without a cause is useless, but the work without advertising is equally self-defeating. Both are needed to continue the fight. point 5 states that the Brigade will make a positive effort to surrender if taken by surprise by a superior force, and they rationalise this stand on the basis of the SLA massacre and the absence of a need for a crispy critters in the revolution. Again, the difference is perhaps one of opinion. The circumstances inherent to each situation and the attitudes of the various individuals involved dictate the course of action to be taken at any particular time. To make a flat statement such as this seems to us to weaken the position of the revolutionaries making it. By weakening our positions we weaken the whole revolution. Point 6 is good except for subpoint "A" - that any contradiction between security and action must be resolved in favour of action. Again, circumstances dictate the importance of the different concepts. Many of us in Anarchist Black Dragon Collective have been in the field covered in point 7. Again, we agree. It is shit - work and it is important. At times it can be as dangerous as armed work. A revolutionary is « revolutionary-no matter what job he does and is therefore as much an enemy of the State as any combatant. The State will handle him as such, too. Point 8 is a paradox we are sure is apparent to all. The area you know is the area that knows you. That is a danger that we all face from time to time. As of this moment, the jury is still out about whether to operate in another group's area and rely on their intelligence apparatus, or to do all your own work in your own backyard. Many of us feel that this is the instance when the concept of federation is strongest. Share the work. Live in LA work in Phoenix, live in Albuquerque, work in Chicago etc. THE MAIN POINT IS TO GET THE WORK DONE. «*£•*****••«• CHRONOLOGY.