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Managers of marauders of the desert?

A critique of activism, both liberal and anarchist.

Crudo

August 29, 2009

Many within the current revolutionary movement have known activism. The specialized role in society that creates managers of social change. Many of us became radicalized through being involved in leftist political parties, animal rights activism, doing vegan outreach, working for labor unions, and holding jobs canvassing for NGOs and non-profits. Often, we were drawn to these forms due to a moral sense that “something should be done” around a certain issue. Galvanized into action, we often became involved in the only forms of organization available, that of the reformist activist left. Since revolutionary ideas are often hard to come across in this society; many of us had to come to our present consciousness after first seeing the limit of spending so much time organizing against the new circus coming to town, handing out ‘Why Vegan’ pamphlets, or logging in the hours for the union or non-profit that we worked for. As we spent more time in these movements, our eyes became open to the poverty of these types of action. We came to see that these activist projects did

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nothing to end exploitation and misery; they only sought to better manage it.

We saw these forms be further recuperated back into capitalism; as we labored long hours canvassing for Greenpeace for shit wages, expanding the vegan capitalist market, or buying into anarchist bike culture. Thus, our desire for the total destruction of the social relations of capitalist civilization came to also encapsulate activism as well. We started to desire a total rupture with class society; not just establish an identity as an “activist” that was outside of the rest of the population which was “passive.” We reject this identity; we became not interested in finding ourselves through stickers on our metal water bottles and how many meetings we went to a month. Instead, we began to desire to become a physical force against the material conditions which exploit and coerce all our lives. We began to see that the issues, were not the issue at all. The solutions, were not the solution. We began to become not interested in the baby steps and progress that this democracy offered us, as we saw that within the social war that is class society, there exists tensions that we hope to push into open rupture with Capital. We do not wish to be managers of the desert which is this society. We do not want it to operate better; be reformed, or changed. This society does not ‘progress.’ The Marxist notion that we are marching to the end of history, even if slowly, and the liberal notion that things have been made better over the years, is false. Capital obeys no master but it’s own will. We wish to destroy it and find the oasis that exists beneath it and in the moments when we engage in conflict.

But, many of us moved simply from leftist and reformist activism simply into anarchist styled activism. Often, these were the only things when we were younger that we believed that we could do “as anarchists.” Many will often state that these are some of the only projects that are successful in bringing new people in our movement. We disagree. We desire a new way to find comrades within the desert, as opposed to wait-

ing for those involved in activism to trickle towards us after they are fed up of the bullshit. We want to find those who are faced with similar conditions and wish to fight against them. We are not removed from the exploited. We too are forced to sell our labor power for wages in order to survive. We pay for rent in order to have a place to live. Our lives our organized, controlled, and directed by those who wish to capitalize off our labor power. We are among those who are broken apart by the color of our skin, what lies between our legs, and our sexual desires. Our desire to destroy class society includes a desire to find comrades which share our passion for the power to control our own lives. Activism is not a vehicle for this; it is an alienated means to better manage an alienated society. We need to find ways in which to find comrades in which we can engage in class conflict with; worlds that build our autonomy and power outside of this system.

Thus, we are not interested in the latest anarchist meme project. We are not interested in the newest form of anarcho-activism. We do not wish to create activist projects. We want power. We want to hit back. We want insurrection. The task lays before us to create ways to find comrades outside of alienated activist means. We need to exist in the spaces that are not sub-cultural; we need to exist in the spaces were people already gather and exist where they feel the tight grip of class society. We need forms of communication that speak to those who could become our comrades; not those in the same ghetto as us. We need projects which speak to the conditions we are faced with; and gestures of revolutionary solidarity which give teeth to the rejection of those conditions. This is why a project like Fire to the Prisons is important; this is why it exists. To give confidence to those element in this society which push for insurrection and revolt; either conscious of it or not. To make those elements more precise and anti-political; to generalize them across all territory for the sake of intensifying our resistance. To put a rock in the hand of everyone who is ready

to throw it and a magazine in the hand of every prisoner who is ready to discover it. This magazine is part of a movement that will usher in the creation of something new; something that has not been done before. This magazine is apart of the re-birth of anarchy as a movement that attacks and destroys class society; not seeks to better manage or reform it.