

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Our Anarchism

First of May Anarchist Alliance

First of May Anarchist Alliance
Our Anarchism
January 2011

Retrieved on 6th August 2021 from utopianmag.com
Published in *The Utopian* Vol. 10.

theanarchistlibrary.org

January 2011

2. To consistently engage in popular anarchist education and agitation, especially its more maximal propositions.

3. To aid our members and friends in deepening and extending both their working class and movement work. As much as possible through our ongoing involvement in our current (semi)mass work.

4. To strengthen understanding and ties between anti-authoritarians on metropolitan and regional levels. We are for organizing circles/networks on programmatically and structurally minimalist bases to heighten awareness of each other's projects and conduct occasional joint educational and social events. To develop over time visible and coordinated presences for anarchists and anti-authoritarians at gatherings and actions of concern to wider layers of the populace.

5. To continue a commitment to the Class Struggle Anarchist Conference (CSAC) while advocating more focused and deeper political and strategic discussion and more coordination of concrete activity.

The creation of the CSAC Inter-Organizational Labor Working Group, its subsequent meeting at the 2010 Labor Notes Conference, and the discussion of a publication are all important first steps. There is serious room and potential to develop an anarchist presence in the labor movement, attract new elements from outside CSAC and strengthen our existing localized work through this body.

We encourage the formation of other working groups in other diverse arenas of struggle. We have an immediate interest in communicating with folks regarding creation of anti-fascist and anti-empire/militarism working groups and are open to others down the road. Collaborative working groups with a public face and activity will strengthen our common movement.

Contents

A Working-Class Movement	8
The Unions	9
Marxist-Anarchist synthesis?	10
An anarchism without hyphens	15
Anarchism, Empire and National Liberation	16
Religion	17

dition or are instead motivated to a libertarian-egalitarian stance by different religious, ecological or political views.

We are for a simple and clear commitment to a) a free, decentralized and cooperative society achieved by a radical break with the system, b) direct and mass action, independent of conventional politics and c) a voluntary collaboration of individuals, groupings, sectoral and social formations charting their course through respectful deliberation and carried out in the spirit of all going forward together with none left behind.

We support federative efforts of a rich variety of groupings. In addition to regional and national organizations constituted around specific social and political programs and theories, we seek the direct affiliation of ongoing campaigns, clinics, kitchens, anti-fascist projects, autonomous worker and neighborhood centers, art and sports clubs, union caucuses, independent workers committees and radical unions, to name a few.

The wide-ranging nature of such an alliance can only contribute to its vitality and innovativeness. The programmatically specific groups can bring many valuable lessons past and present from the international anarchist movement into the mix. This is on top of their memberships' accumulated skills, experiences and connections. The projects of specific area activism help ensure a more outward facing stance and a much more diverse skill set.

We must be constantly tuned in to preserving and deepening all our organizations' anti-authoritarian character at all times. Pressures for effectiveness, delegation of tasks, uneven levels of education, experience and skills all are problematic but unavoidable. The attempts at remedy cannot be structural alone. Political questions of ideology, instrumentality, and values are key.

In the coming period First of May defines its reason for existence and tasks to be:

1. To defend and develop the ideas outlined in this statement. To dialogue and debate these and other questions of revolutionary strategy with other individuals and groups.

Inside the broad movements, we will have to (along with the new currents) contend with forces committed to dominating these movements. Liberals – sometimes pressured and pushed by, but in general allied with more formally left-wing and even self-proclaimed “revolutionary” organizations – will be attempting to isolate and block more radical elements and surges.

The liberals’ goal is to subordinate the societal left to a conservative pro-capitalist strategy of cooptation and government reform (in the most limited sense of the term) in an attempt to stabilize the existing system by shifting and reshuffling some of the present structures of domination and exploitation.

In combating an ever more aggressive social movement of the right they will be hard put to come up with effective means of confronting and politically dividing this hard reality. Rather their timidity and statist methods could lead to ill and tragic results.

With enemies left and right the anti-authoritarian left will need to be organized. Serious future social/political battles will be played out on regional, national and international stages. The anarchist movement will need to develop organizational forms to coordinate at these levels. There can be no denying this just as there can be no denying the truth that we need strong popular bases in countless locales.

Any serious, rooted and effective regional to North American anarchist co-ordinations/federations can only fully come together out of a rising curve of politicization, struggle and solidarity/survival organizing. The precise politics and organizational combinations of such formations will be shaped and worked out in struggle. However, it is crucial the discussion and initial steps begin in the here and now.

We are for a common front in action and mutual aid of all anti-authoritarian and anarchist currents.

We do not care whether the people and groups who step forward are coming from a similar interest in developing the anarchist tra-

Note: This document was written, re-written, and “polished up” over several months, with the Final Draft completed in January 2011. It was drawn up before the tremendous uprisings across the Middle East, the stirrings of the workers movement in the U.S., or the horrible disasters in Japan. While we were as surprised as anyone over the particulars of these developments, in many ways these events have confirmed our attitude expressed in this document: The possibility of revolution, the decisive role of the working-classes, the importance of participating in the emerging mass movements as anarchists, the need to incorporate religious people into antiauthoritarian organization, the obligation to oppose Empire, etc. We cannot see the future, and we anticipate much of what follows will need to be re-examined, re-worked or replaced – but for now it still serves as a useful summation of where we are at.

Over the last year the Michigan-Minnesota Group has begun to reconstitute ourselves from a long-time affinity group into an anarchist organization of struggle, First of May Anarchist Alliance (M1). We aim to build a trans-continental anarchist organization that is firm on anarchist core principles, adaptable to changing terrains of struggle with a mind set open to new ideas, influences and techniques. We intend to participate in a range of anti-authoritarian and anarchist formations as well as carry out our own independent work in broader arenas. We have some specific concerns and points of view that warrant an organized existence independent of any existing group.

The following statement is by no means a comprehensive or detailed elaboration of our views. Its purpose is to give people some sense of where we are coming from.

M1’s affinity is built around four principles:

1. a commitment to revolution
2. a working class orientation
3. a non-doctrinaire anarchism

4. a non-sectarian and multi-layered approach to organization

REVOLUTION: Anarchism is not only direct action, decentralization, and dissent from capital, the state and an array of oppressions. It is not just about struggling to ensure that the practices and processes of the movements we are part of reflect our libertarian and egalitarian values. It is also about putting “Revolution” out there in the many discussions and debates about where society is going.

Overturing the system has long been a moral imperative given the toll it has already taken on people and the Earth. Now a radical leap to an alternative society is becoming an increasingly necessary act of ecological and social selfdefense. We must not hide this evaluation from our coworkers, neighbors, classmates or our social movement friends and comrades. It is the need for revolution that, in part, motivates our broad feelings of solidarity. It is the purpose, program and plan that impel our many acts of resistance.

We all need to wrestle with the problem of raising revolution in day-to-day life and activism. It is not easy to do this in a fashion that does not seem fantastic, delusional or perfunctorily tacked on. The present period has been one of intermittent and relatively low levels of struggle and political consciousness. There has existed a constant pressure to downplay the more radical and maximal aspects of our politics. Against this tendency to conservatism we are committed to the development of a more fully elaborated and popular conception of anti-authoritarian revolution and the role of anarchist revolutionaries in its realization.

The potential for a sustained break in the current order of things has been growing. Two draining wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; Katrina and the BP gulf oil spill; the banking collapse, foreclosure crisis and ensuing severe recession (and a litany of other calamities and crimes) have caused large numbers of people left, center and right to have their faith in the system and the elites severely shaken.

itics). We actively resist religion-based authority. At the same time we do not discourage or closet those aspects of personal belief that bring people forward as revolutionaries. The movement we need must be mass, determined, and open to latter day John Browns, Zapatas, Dorothy Days, and Malcolms.

A look at the past Civil Rights / Black Liberation Movement and a close look at some of today’s organizations and proto-movements underline another lesson. We see significant activity by faith-based organizations in social justice activities ranging from immigration and anti-war, to workers rights to urban mass transit amongst others. These formations are still defined and limited by their liberalism, but are attracting a new layer of energetic activists amongst youth and workers to the social democratic aspects of their politics. In coming years the cauldron of struggle will undoubtedly lead to a radicalization of elements, if not wings of such organizations, coalitions etc. We should not leave unnecessary obstacles stand between us and such developments.

NON-SECTARIAN AND MULTI-LAYERED APPROACH TO ORGANIZATION: We are for the creation of antiauthoritarian/anarchist federations of regional, national, continental and even global dimensions. Such federations must be of a mass character and able to intervene in and influence the coming broader left, in addition to launching and defining independent anarchist campaigns and projects.

The outlines and nature of this anticipated wider movement can only be speculated on.

We can be certain that it will be comprised of distinct social formations arising from various communities and sectoral concerns. Some formations will be short lived, but others will be of longer standing and a potentially radically shifting nature. New currents with an anti-authoritarian thrust will undoubtedly arise in and around these formations. Anarchist militants must be inside and contributing to such developments in addition to building independent projects.

landowning classes. So it is also no surprise that much of the opposition to these obscurantist regimes was militantly anti-clerical. Today's anarchist movement was also largely born in struggles against conservative and reactionary mores epitomized by the so-called Christian Right. No small wonder our movement has maintained an irreligious stance.

M1 jettisons this stance because we believe it to be an anarchist but understandable holdover from our past. Further, we believe it to be a roadblock to deepening our movement's presence in many sectors of the working class and oppressed.

Hypocrites aside, spiritual belief is intensely personal. Anarchy's bedrock is the defense and development of each unique human personality. The social revolutionary aspect of anarchism comes from the realization that gender, ethnic, class, sexual and other oppressions and exploitation do violence to personhood and must be resisted collectively. If we liquidate individuality in the course of our collective endeavors we position ourselves on the same slippery slope as the authoritarians.

Our experience shows that some folks will respond to our activity and organizing and step forward motivated by their religious beliefs and values. Many assume that our activism is also motivated by such beliefs and are surprised to find we hold atheist views. If someone of religious outlook unites with us in struggle and is interested in our fuller views should they be subjected to bigoted humor or background banter about believers, Jesus, Allah, etc.? When it is their personal version of religious belief that motivates their own resistance and feelings of solidarity? It happens in our movement, all too often.

How one acts in the world should be the basis of our revolutionary affinity. We do not care what personal philosophy motivates a person or group to a similar anti-authoritarian outlook /fighting stance. We argue with folks on issues involving incontrovertible facts (such as evolution). We confront and struggle with people who harbor reactionary and/or patriarchal planks of theology (pol-

A real break will entail the rise of ongoing mass movements left and right. The outlines of this can already be seen in the mobilizations/counter-mobilizations and debates around healthcare, immigration and culture/religion (in particular the political and physical attacks on Muslims).

These developments portend dangers as well as possibilities for action. We cannot trust simply in the course of events to take the broadly left-wing movements into fundamentally attacking the underlying system itself or developing a truly anti-authoritarian character. We cannot confine our role to getting people into motion around their immediate concerns and trusting an unseen logic of struggle to lead to evermore radical and anti-authoritarian results.

A progressively unfolding Left strategy of "one step at a time" will not suffice. We must wage a conscious fight for a revolutionary and anarchist outcome in the here and now if there is ever to be an advance in that direction.

A WORKING CLASS ORIENTATION: We want an anarchist movement weighted towards and rooted in the working class and poorer sectors of society. The working class has the potential to both shake and reshape society. We do not dismiss the skills, concerns or contributions of other strata – but a solid working class component is necessary to any fully liberatory and egalitarian social transformation.

If the working class is to be a force for liberation, sizeable numbers must turn away from the concept of defending or restoring a precarious "middle class" existence. (In other words, fighting for re-inclusion into a social and environmental arrangement that is proving itself to be ever more unsustainable.) Instead we must champion independent working class organization that aggressively encourages and defends the struggle and self-organization of all the excluded and oppressed as allies in a fight for an alternative society.

Anarchists must increasingly put ourselves in positions to help create such developments. As individuals and collectives we need

to carefully assess where we work, live and organize. In these settings we must systematically build our personal and political relationships through involvement in a range of struggles small and large. We should not devalue as non-political the personal acts of solidarity, compassion, and love. Conversely, we should not assume any lack of interest in our grander or more controversial ideas.

We must remain intimately involved in the lives and debates amongst rank and file working and poor people. So we oppose the widespread trend of taking paid staff positions in the unions and non-profits that would place us outside of the grassroots and dependent on and tied to reformist hierarchy. Similarly, while we need a movement that includes serious intellectuals and artists, we must also be on guard against the negative aspects of academic careerism and sub-culture isolation.

Our priority is building personal-political networks within the working-class with our co-workers, neighbors, classmates and their/our families, and developing revolutionary nuclei from within those networks. Workers have numerous familial and community ties to aid in such an endeavor.

A Working-Class Movement

Armed with anarchist principles and concepts (and a good bit of energy and creativity) we must try and resurrect a culture of working class independence, direct action and solidarity on an ever-widening scale. We must push for diverse self-organization and the cooperative development of alternative/decentralist strategies for addressing societal problems outside of and in counter-position to conventional governmental structures.

We fully understand this will involve an uphill battle of methodical education, agitation and organizing. The goal is an anti-authoritarian united front of whatever sections can be mus-

ing themselves and engaging in dialogue and debate about the course of struggle. We must oppose this criminalization even as we clarify our critique of the dominant or other specific resistance organizations.

We believe it is vital that the costs of Empire be raised in our mass work in the Labor movement and other social movements. The wars in the Middle East are directly tied to the massive cut-backs being demanded by the bosses and politicians in education, social services and retirement. It will not be possible to resist these cuts or make demands for our communities needs without confronting the costs of the war machine. Any base built on narrow trade-union demands will not be sufficient to develop the revolutionary nuclei needed to help create the challenge needed.

Our understanding of Empire includes not only the outward projection of economic, cultural, and military domination but also that the US and Canadian states themselves are built on the colonization of Native land in North America. Our consistent opposition to Empire must mean an opposition to the US state. Our vision is of the Empire dismantled, not some red flag raised at the White House.

We also understand that the organization of Empire is not static and that the continuing globalization of capital and the rise of international economic and supra-state institutions will mean that both imperialism and the struggles against it will look and feel different than previous eras. We will continue to study and discuss the implications of these changes and what they mean for our work.

Religion

Anarchists and anarchist organizations have overwhelmingly seen themselves as militantly atheist. Given our movement's history this is not surprising. Russia, Italy and Spain are at the center of most anarchist history. These were societies dominated by single state churches intertwined with particularly reactionary

Anarchism, Empire and National Liberation

Two approaches have dominated the modern anarchist approach to national liberation movements. Both are inadequate and have helped ensure anarchism usually remained on the sidelines of the major struggles against imperialism and for self-determination.

The first approach condemns all national liberation movements – from top to bottom and across all tendencies – as inherently capitalist and statist and therefore as equal an enemy as Empire. This then justifies abstention from solidarity with those people under the gun of imperialism. Besides being entirely immoral, this practice leaves anarchist ideas and methods off the playing field of the imperialized world.

The second failed approach also removes anarchism as an independent political pole, by uncritically backing whatever force or leader is fighting against (or posing against) US or other imperialism. The traditional anarchist critique of hierarchy, the State, and patriarchy are pushed to the side in order to support the “leadership” of the resistance.

Against all this we promote anarchist participation within movements against Empire and for self-determination, advocating anti-authoritarian, internationalist, decentralized and cooperative societies as an alternative to social democratic, state-capitalist or religious fundamentalist opposition projects. We see this as in keeping with the best traditions from the anarchist movement.

For those of us living and working in North America we have a particular responsibility to oppose the ongoing wars of occupation in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine and other countries around the world. We must help build anti-war consciousness, movements and actions, as well as stand firm against the racist hysteria directed against Muslim, Arab, and East African communities here.

The criminalization of supporters of the main movements in Palestine, Lebanon, Somalia and other countries prevents anti-war movements and those immigrant communities from fully express-

tered of wage labor, immigrants, the excluded urban and rural poor – and grouping around itself sympathetic independent craft and service people, shopkeepers, small farmers, artists, scholars, health and science professionals. We see this being done through conferences, assemblies, councils and common struggle of an array of collaborating formations.

If of enough weight and mass such a united front could act as a type of societal rallying point against the irresponsible and corrupt capitalist and political classes, the racist and nationalist right-wing movements and a general social dissolution.

The history of capitalism is inextricably bound to white supremacy and patriarchy and has thus left deep structural legacies of inequality in the economy and society. Despite advances on the front of formal equality, the declining and shifting economy coupled with the neglect of the social and educational infrastructure has marginalized large sectors of the population, creating a growing class of permanently excluded. This has fallen heaviest on Black, Brown and Native peoples. Poverty continues to be heavily “gendered” toward women and children. The struggles against patriarchy, racism, and capitalism must become one.

A working class orientation does not dismiss or neglect the need for organized autonomous movements of people of color, women, GLBTQ or other people even if they are of a mixed class character. Anarchists must be active in these formations (and in support), working to cohere the more militant elements around these movements’ more radical demands as well as direct action alliances with a range of other popular and working class struggles.

The Unions

We see the mainstream unions as having a dual character. On the one hand, the unions over the course of time (and some from the beginning) have integrated themselves into the regular function-

ing of capitalism, becoming reliable partners in economic management and political theater with the ruling elite. On the other hand, despite this (or not), the unions maintain a space where workers struggles do emerge and are either bottled up or push forward. Our approach is therefore not limited to a single organizational tactic.

We are opposed to the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, have no illusions in any “movement” from above, and thus reject a simplistic “Build the Unions” approach. But depending on the workplace, industry, and union we fully expect to also participate within the unions, union reform movements, or rank and file and “extra-union” groupings – as revolutionaries and anarchists. We would need to carefully assess any bids for elected union/community positions, being clear on what we are trying to accomplish, what we really could achieve, as well as the duration of time spent there.

We are also part of and support the re-emerging I.W.W., Workers Centers, Workers Assemblies and other labor formations outside of the mainstream unions. We plan on further elaborating our perspective on the Labor Movement in the future.

FOR A NON-DOCTRINAIRE ANARCHISM: Our anarchism is both revolutionary and heterodox. We maintain hostility to conventional politics. We are opposed to the programs and methods of the various union and movement bureaucracies, including their most left variants. We are not fooled by authoritarians on the left, who opportunistically clothe themselves in elements of anti-authoritarian garb, but haven’t seriously examined their past and present practices.

Marxist-Anarchist synthesis?

There are those who believe some kind of synthesis of anarchism and Marxism is needed. There are others who are attracted to developing various strains of councilist, autonomist, or libertarian Marxism. We reject this approach. There is no question that Marxism has

Bloc, for instance, has gone from being a useful show of force and protection for the anarchist movement, to, too often, an isolated and state-scrutinized cultural ghetto with limited reach and influence.

The revolution cannot be “mailed-in.” The recent actions of the “Informal Anarchist Federation” in Italy show a callous disregard for working-class casualties and a complete tonedeafness to the real needs of the struggle and of the ability of the State to take advantage of their actions to solidify control and maintain the initiative.

Our critique of “Insurrectionism” is not a rejection of militancy and self-defense, nor a consignment of the fight to the distant horizon. Our members’ history and experience, particularly within the anti-fascist movement but in other struggles as well, is one of building popular combativity, developing our capabilities, and in general, keeping the insurrectionary arts alive.

An anarchism without hyphens

From the above we hope to show our commitment to listening and learning from a number of different traditions and trends within anarchism – without painting ourselves into a narrow ideological corner. This should not be confused with favoring a slop-bag organization with no clarity or direction. We are determined to build a group with coherent anarchist politics and the ability to carry out work and discussions democratically. But we do so with both a sense of humility and an understanding that the politics we wish to develop does not currently reside in any one of the anarchist sub-schools.

In some of the de-industrialized cities abandoned by capitalism, including where we are active, new movements of community farmers, food activists, and “take back the land” projects have emerged. These new formations are creating networks stretching out over entire regions, encompassing city, suburb, and more traditionally acknowledged farmland. We defend these autonomous projects and support linking them up with oppositional social movements.

We absolutely oppose significant trends within the “green” movements that embrace anti-human and anti-working class ideology. We reject and will fight any and all racist and sexist ideas, for instance those that oppose immigration and support population controls.

Insurrectionism. We do not believe that the revolutionary change needed can be achieved through an accumulated series of reforms or by an expanding community of antiauthoritarian practice. There will need to be an uprising of the oppressed and exploited against the ruling class. Land and workplaces must be seized, police and military disarmed, and the will of the rulers broken. A mass and popular insurrection will be necessary for the revolutionary transformation we seek.

This clear need has prompted several trends – anarchist and others – to identify as “Insurrectionists.” The Insurrectionists reject left bureaucratic movement management and mediation and are rightly suspicious of organization that tends simply towards self-perpetuation. However, the Insurrectionists create an ideology with its own particular fetishisms and by doing so promote a rather dogmatic program regarding acceptable (non)organization and tactics.

While we welcome a radical approach and a confrontation with reformism (including among anarchists), we are not impressed with any lazy caricature of insurrection. Poorly thought out “militancy” uncritical of its isolation from broader working-class communities and social movements offers little threat. The Black

been the dominant left-wing framework for most of the last century. We must learn what we can from the wide array of thinkers and fighters from that tradition – but from our viewpoint Marxism is too corrupted by its decidedly centralist, elitist, determinist, and amoral core to offer a framework for working class and human liberation.

We will engage in debate, discussion, and joint work with serious and honest people and movements from the Marxist currents. We will seek to clarify commonalities and differences, all the while defending anti-authoritarian positions and approach. Indeed we would like to recruit some of the Marxists to our anarchist program.

We believe anarchist theory and practice needs to be renewed and elaborated. While there are limits and deficiencies in the realms of theory and practice, there is also much past and present in anarchism to uncover, weigh and draw upon. This history is rich and continues to provide a substantial basis for a viable historical trend and a present day fighting movement.

What follows is our both our assessment of varying anarchist positions as well as thoughts on areas of anarchist debate. It is our attempt to provide a greater outline and sense of how we view the broad anarchist traditions. The following also represents in many ways both the influences as well as our points of departure.

Anarcho-syndicalism. Anarcho-syndicalism has much to recommend in it. It has a working class orientation, a strong sense of organization, and rightly gives great importance to direct action and the general strike. One of the deepest transformations of human society, the Spanish Revolution, was largely due to an anarcho-syndicalist movement.

However, anarcho-syndicalism tends towards a class reductionism, organizational dogmatism (“One Big Union,” “The CNT was my womb, it shall be my tomb”), and downplays the social, political, and cultural dimensions of struggle. It has exhibited strong tendencies towards centralism and incremental reformism on the

one hand or isolationist purism within the workers movement on the other.

Changes in the global industrial systems have challenged but not eliminated anarcho-syndicalism as a potential force. That said, we still lean heavily upon its best aspects. Members of M1 actively participate within the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.)

Anarchist-Communism. The other major school in the revolutionary anarchist tradition attempts to have a more holistic vision and flexible approach to organization. There is much to be learned from its practice, writings, and heroism as well.

Anarchist-Communism in its early articulations was weakened by its over-optimistic view of an “anarchist” human nature that led to both anti-organizational (“The street will organize us!”) and propaganda-by-the-deed conclusions.

Modern Anarchist-Communism, overlapping to a large degree with the “Platformist” current, bends the stick too far in the opposite direction. While their organizational seriousness and commitment to mass struggle are exemplary, an influence of certain forms and practice (not necessarily politics) reminiscent of Trotskyist groups is apparent.

While a libertarian communism may or may not be our long-term preference, we do not make it a point of unity. Against any dogmatic insistence that the revolutionary society must be organized on a specific communist basis, we make co-operation and experimentation our watchwords. There is no way to get around the fact that a truly mass self-organized revolt will produce diverse attempts at social reconstruction. Fixation on and zeal in the pursuit of one form is a dangerous thing no matter the intent.

Anarchist-Communists generally fail to take seriously the problem of the label “Communism” in a world where millions have been murdered under the banner of “Communism.” As revolutionaries with experience in areas with large Polish, Hmong, Balkan, and East African immigrant communities this is not an academic question for us.

Green and Eco-Anarchism. With the green and eco-anarchists we share the view that the ecological crisis is fundamental and that the industrial society must be radically reorganized. The tendencies generally associated with the “class struggle” anarchist traditions need to fully integrate ecological concerns into their vision. Economic life arises from human relations with the Earth. How this life is constituted and organized in a decentralist fashion needs to be fully rooted in our politics.

The technologies and industrialization developed and mastered in the service of the authoritarian and capitalist society are constantly reshaping our world. We are witness to an unimaginable and frightening growth of agribusiness and urbanization. This process uproots people’s land-based traditions, their knowledge and capabilities for self-sufficiency and autonomy; creates a consumerist culture in which mass sectors of the populace are reduced to cheap labor pools; and creates conditions for the mass extinction of earth’s species – human, non-human, and plant.

A significant development of this devastating course is that the corporations of trans-national capitalism have set up massive economic zones, which combined with the deepening crisis of people’s detachment from the land, gives rise to global maquiladora type factory-cities surrounded by vast slums. Through any combination of factors these factory-cities can be left behind by the capitalist classes with the work “outsourced” to other regions deemed more manageable or with low cost risks. The areas – whether in full capitalist development or abandoned – become bio-catastrophes.

There is resistance ranging from rural insurgencies waged by peasants and indigenous peoples, to independent organizing within the walls of the factory-cities. Tendencies within the green anarchist movement would ignore these struggles, heralding instead the mere collapse of industrial society. We argue for the linking up of the rural and urban forces into a movement that can reshape the terrain imposed upon us by capitalism.