Revolution Is More Than a Word

23 Theses on Anarchism

Alpine Anarchist Productions

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Intro

Since the turn of the millennium, anarchism has experienced a strong upswing. In a widely read 2004 article by David Graeber and Andrej Grubačić, it was announced as the "revolutionary movement of the twenty-first century", and in a recent book on the Occupy Wall Street movement, titled *Translating Anarchy* and based on interviews with numerous organizers, author Mark Bray contests that anarchist ideas were the driving ideological force behind it. Meanwhile, anarchist projects (journals, bookfairs, organizing groups) have increased significantly over the past twenty years. This is all great news.

At the same time, neoliberalism rules supreme, the gaps between the rich and the poor grow wider by the day, wars are raging, surveillance has surpassed Orwellian levels, and nothing seems able to stop the ecological destruction of the world as we know it. If the current order is challenged in any significant way, the agents are either religious fundamentalists, neofascists, or, in the best case, left-wing movements revolving around charismatic leaders and populist parties. Even if anarchists like to claim anarchist elements in uprisings, from Cairo's Tahrir Square to the streets of Ferguson, Missouri, it is questionable whether self-declared anarchists really have played any significant role in these events. In short, despite the mentioned upswing, anarchism appears as marginalized as ever when it comes to the grand scale of things. In light of this, it seems as good a time as any to reflect on anarchism's role in the overall political arena and to examine its strengths and weaknesses.

The contents of this text are presented in a concise and straightforward manner, which makes generalizations inevitable. They are based on experiences in Western and Northern Europe; readers will have to decide how much these experiences match their own and how relevant they are for the scenes they themselves are active in.

What is anarchism?

In postmodern times, it has become popular to forgo definitions, as they supposedly put our thoughts into cages. This is a cop-out. It is self-evident that definitions are but tools for communication and can't lay claim on capturing the essence of a given phenomenon. A practical definition is based on certain criteria: the origin of a term and etymological aspects, its usage and change of meaning over time, and terminological coherence within the language system we are using. The following working definition of anarchism ought to be understood in that way.

Anarchism is, first, the attempt to establish an egalitarian society that allows for the freest development of its individual members possible. The egalitarianism is the necessary precondition for this free development being attainable for everyone and not just a chosen few. It is curtailed only by inhibiting the free development of others; clear boundaries can't be drawn (where does one's freedom end and another one's begin?) but this does not mean that they can't be negotiated.

So far, this definition doesn't stray far from the Marxist idea of communism. The difference lies in its second part, namely the belief that the establishment of an egalitarian society enabling free individual development is dependent on political actors implementing the essential values of such a society immediately, in their ways of organizing, living, and fighting. Today, this is often called "prefigurative" politics. It implies that no dictatorship of the proletariat, no benevolent leaders, no well-meaning vanguards can pave the way to the society desired; the people have

to do this themselves. The people also need to develop the structures necessary to defend and preserve such a society. Self-management, mutual aid, horizontal organization, and the fight against all forms of oppression are key principles of anarchism.

The origin of anarchism as a self-defined political movement dates back to the social question in mid-nineteenth-century Europe. Anarchists were part of the International Workingmen's Association, better known as the First International, together with the political forces that would later turn into social democrats on the one hand and Leninists on the other.[1] We consider this origin important and see anarchism as part of the left-wing tradition. We are opposed to declaring anarchism a "philosophy", an "ethic", a "principle", or a "way of life" rather than a political movement. An existential attitude is one thing; organizing for political change is another. Without proper organizing, anarchism is easily reduced to a noble idea, reflecting religion or hipsterism more than political ambition. At the same time, anarchism is not just antiauthoritarian class struggle. It is broader and includes activities that range from setting up social centers to deconstructing gender norms to conceiving alternative forms of transportation. Anarchism's prefigurative dimension has always included questions that didn't fit narrow definitions of the Left: dietary, sexual, and spiritual concerns as well as matters of personal ethics.

Anarchism and the Left: Social democracy and Leninism

As a political movement that historically belongs to the Left, the relationship between anarchism and social democracy as well as Leninism is of importance. We ought to remember that the ultimate goal — a stateless and classless society guaranteeing the free development of all — was originally the same for all three currents.

Often, the three currents are characterized as left (social democracy), radical left (Leninism), and ultra left (anarchism). We think this is misleading. We should rather think of a triangle where each current is equally far away from the other. While anarchism and Leninism share a revolutionary stance, and Leninism and social democracy Marxist roots, anarchism and social democracy both reject the dictatorship of the proletariat. Anarchism is as close to social democracy as it is to Leninism, and vice versa.

The major criticisms levied at anarchism from Marxist ideologues (social democratic or Leninist) are: a) anarchism is naïve, that is, it has an idealized understanding of human nature and social organization; b) anarchism is reckless, that is, it has no understanding of how to bring about political change and therefore encourages heedless action that, in the worst case, allows reactionary forces to prevail; c) anarchism is petty-bourgeois, that is, it is so much concerned with individual liberty that it disregards social justice.

[1] We meant to sidestep footnotes in this text but found a quick explanation of how we use the terms "social democracy", "Leninism", and "Marxism" unavoidable. While anarchism split from Marxist currents within the Left early on (the expulsion of Mikhail Bakunin and James Guillaume from the First International's 1872 congress in The Hague is often regarded as a pivotal moment), the split between reformist social democrats and revolutionary Leninists only occurred with the Russian Revolution of 1917. At the time, both currents were still considered Marxist and committed to the creation of a socialist society. In the social democratic movement, this ideological orientation quickly faded amidst parliamentary realities and, by the 1930s, it had disappeared from basically all social democratic party constitutions. Today's self-titled social democratic parties are out of touch with this history and pursue neoliberal politics with a whiff of Keynesianism. We do not refer to these parties when we speak of "social democracy" in this text but to a tradition of earnest Marxist politics within the realm of parliamentarianism. Some, albeit few, leftist parties today continue this tradition.

Some of this criticism is valid, but it only concerns certain tendencies within anarchism. Overall, the anarchist understanding of human nature was, in fact, much more nuanced than that of other left-wing currents (for example, regarding the psychology of power). In terms of bringing about political change, some anarchist actions might have been reckless but most have been well-measured and thought-through. And while there have been individualistic tendencies, they never defined the movement as a whole. Perhaps most importantly, anarchism has, regardless of its true or alleged shortcomings, a number of advantages over its left-wing cousins:

- Anarchism has a stronger critique of the nature of authority. Whatever you want to say about the supposed simplicity of anarchist theory, in *God and the State*, written in 1871, Mikhail Bakunin summarized the fate of what would later become the Soviet Union in two pages. He predicted that a revolutionary party assuming power would form a new ruling elite, prevent people's liberation, and effectively prepare its own downfall. Today, prominent Marxists such as John Holloway, Slavoj Žižek, and Alain Badiou speak of the need for a communism without the state and the party as if this was a new invention. Anarchists have been saying this all along.

- Anarchists have always paid strong attention to the cultural aspects of power, while, at the end of the day, Marxism has focused on economic relationships, with the economic base determining the cultural superstructure. While lip service has been paid to this relationship being dynamic and dialectical, it has seldom led Marxists to pay the same attention to cultural struggles as anarchists have.

- Not only cultural aspects of power have been emphasized by anarchists but also the multiplicity of oppression. Only some strains of anarchism have shared the Marxist inclination to delegate supposedly non-working-class struggles to side issues. Anarchists have, for example, formulated stronger critiques of patriarchy and nationalism. In a time when terms such as "multiple oppression" and "intersectionality" are in vogue, anarchism can rightfully claim a pioneering role.

- While — like their Marxist counterparts — most classical anarchists believed in scientific progress as a necessity for moving toward a liberated society, anarchism is characterized neither by a deterministic understanding of history nor by Eurocentric rationalism. Elitist concepts of scientists as a quasi-leading class were criticized early on, while utopian perspectives have been held in high regard rather than being dismissed as distractive pipe dreams. With historical materialism looking shakier than ever, this speaks in anarchism's favor.

- At least some prominent anarchists, such as Leo Tolstoy and Gustav Landauer, understood the need for a "spiritual revolution". Not to indulge in hocus-pocus but to emphasize the need of changing the human soul in order to change the world. A spiritual dimension makes radical politics richer, not poorer.

- Anarchists' skepticism toward historical materialism has often earned them the Marxist accusation of being "voluntaristic", that is, of believing that revolutionary processes are dependent on people choosing (having the will — *voluntas*) to support them. Marxists consider this shallow, insisting on economic realities determining individual consciousness

and therefore individuals' capacity for political action. It is the anarchists who are right. Social change comes from people wanting social change.

- In the work of later twentieth-century anarchists — for example, in that of Murray Bookchin, Paul Feyerabend, and the so-called anarcho-primitivists, with all their problems — the trust in technology has been challenged in ways that Marxist theory has not been able to rival. In times when technology's role in the social and ecological crises we are facing becomes ever more evident, it is impossible not to give the anarchists credit for this.

- The anarchist is the permanent critic. With a strong skepticism toward both totalitarian ideologies and personality cults, anarchists have always been quick to point out flaws in political movements. While this has problematic connotations — from being a nuisance to, at times, hindering collective organizing — it is also essential for preventing power relations from becoming stale and dogmatic.

- Anarchism's "prefigurative" politics give it a strong practical edge that allows for changes in everyday life that few other political ideologies have been able to generate.

- Anarchism's focus on diversity begets rich forms of political intervention. In terms of creativity and innovation, anarchism easily outwits the Marxist Left.

Anarchism and revolution

The single biggest weakness of anarchism is the lack of a viable concept of revolution, meaning a radical redistribution of power and wealth. This is particularly striking when considering anarchism's revolutionary claims. Distancing oneself from "reformist", "liberal", or "moderate" forces is an integral part of the anarchist identity.

No anarchist society of any significant scale has ever been established outside of circumstances of war. None of them lasted for more than a couple of years. Anarchists routinely blame the ruthlessness of the capitalists' lackeys and the backstabbing nature of the Marxists for this. There is truth in both, but it is not a sufficient explanation for anarchism's poor revolutionary record. An important factor is anarchists denying themselves — for good and honorable reasons — to occupy a role that most revolutions require. The often-quoted words of Friedrich Engels are true: "Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all of which are highly authoritarian means." Anarchists have no satisfying answer to this dilemma. Attempts have been made, but none of them are compelling. The most significant ones can be summarized as follows:

a. A "dropping-out" approach, which received its strongest theoretical backing in the settlement theories of Gustav Landauer. Landauer suggested building an anarchist society through autonomous rural communities and cooperatives rather than through attacking the state. It is a beautiful idea, but radical communes have come and gone for about 150 years without ever substantially threatening capitalism and state power. As soon as they are bothersome they are destroyed or integrated into the capitalist market; in the past

decades, the commercialization of "alternative culture" has been but one striking example of the latter.

b. A "radical reformist" approach, where people speak of a "revolution in stages" or of revolution as a "process" rather than a "rupture". What hides behind these formula is usually little more than a traditional reformist approach peppered with radical rhetoric. It shouldn't concern us much.

c. An "insurrectionist" approach that transfers the notion of revolution from structural change to a moment of blissful empowerment. There is nothing wrong with insurrections. They reveal social contradictions, they temporarily turn power relations upside down, they inspire, and more. But they do not change society's basic power structures; and if they do contribute to the creation of a power vacuum, it might indeed be filled by reactionaries when radical counter-structures aren't in place. While insurrections can be important elements of a revolution, conflating them with the revolution itself is like confusing a face-off with the game of hockey.

d. A "collapsist" approach, which deems any attempt to correct the current order futile, since only catastrophic events can and will bring its end. In this logic, anarchist activism means getting prepared for the catastrophe in order to replace the vanishing power structures ("civilization") with small and independent anarchist communities. The main problem with this scenario is the absence of any mechanism other than the rule of force allowing us to deal with the inevitable social conflict it implies. In other words, collapsism easily lapses into Social Darwinism. And even if it doesn't, assuming a collapse is no basis for sound political action. It is very daring — to say the least — to advocate no longer trying to correct the system because it will soon come down anyway. What if it won't? Turning defeatism into a virtue won't help us.

The fact that anarchism has no viable theory of revolution does not discredit it or suggest it to be insignificant. In fact, anarchism's historical influence far exceeds even the estimations of most anarchists. Anarchism has always been an important engine for social change. The eight-hour work day, free speech, antimilitarism, abortion rights, LGBTQ liberation, antiauthoritarian pedagogy, veganism, etc. — once upon a time, all of these struggles were to a significant degree spearheaded by anarchists. It's just that none of them proved revolutionary. Instead, they have mostly been integrated into the development of the capitalist nation state.

Anarchists need to be honest. Either they admit to being reformists with a radical edge (nothing wrong with that if made explicit), or they work on actually developing a revolutionary perspective. Radical posturing and dismissing "reformist"/"liberal"/"moderate" politics is embarrassing if your own politics aren't any more revolutionary than those of NGOs, church groups, or welfare organizations.

Anarchism's problems today

The problem of revolution has haunted anarchism since its inception. Other problems have come and gone, depending on historical circumstances and the state of the movement. Here are the main ones we're able to identify today:

- There is an unfortunate sense of moral superiority, which often overshadows political work. The underlying problem seems to be that two motivations overlap when people become active in anarchist circles: one is that you want to change the world; the other is that you want to be better than the average person. The latter easily leads to self-marginalization since any sense of moral superiority relies on belonging to a selected few rather than the masses. When this becomes dominant, your identity takes precedent over your actions and pointing out the personal shortcomings of others over political change. Ironically, the main targets are often people from within our own ranks rather than the enemy, following the sorry logic of, "If you can't hit the ones you need to hit, you hit those within arm's reach." The combination of judging outsiders while competing with insiders for the moral top-dog position is incompatible with any movement claiming revolutionary integrity.

- The anarchist movement is, by and large, a subculture. Subcultures are great. They provide a home to people (sometimes a life-saving one), they help preserve activist knowledge, they allow for experimentation, and so on. But dissent is not revolution. So if the politics are reduced to the subculture, the revolutionary rhetoric becomes empty and alienating. People hate this and fuck that, but to what end?

- The default mode (mood) of many anarchist circles ranges from grumpy to outright rude. At times, our supposed microcosms of a liberated world are among the most uninviting places imaginable: dark, dirty, and populated by folks who confuse unfriendliness with rebellion. Acting like a jerk does not make you more radical, it just makes you a jerk. Sadly, belligerence also characterizes internal debates. The threads on some anarchist online forums are among the safest means to turn people off anarchism for good. A radical approach to conflict is characterized by openness and self-criticism, not anonymous growling.

- Despite the theoretical embrace of individuality and diversity, many anarchist scenes are incredibly uniform. Any average coffee shop on main street brings together a wider variety of people than most anarchist venues. There are historical reasons for this, but essentially, anarchist culture — the language, the appearance, the social codes — is simply very homogenous. How anarchist are environments in which people feel uncomfortable because of what they wear, eat, or listen to?

- There is a crucial divide in anarchist circles between activists who are opposed to injustice and activists who experience injustice. All activists need to work together to effectively change anything, but the different motivations need to be considered. While people who follow a missionary call tend to be rather ideological, people affected by injustice are often more pragmatic. If such a difference is not recognized, people will drift apart. In the worst case, only the ideologues remain, with abstract debates about personal identity or acceptable language assuming the supposed forefront of radical politics while losing any connection with political work on the ground. Radical politics, then, becomes primarily an intellectual exercise that says next to nothing about the quality of its protagonists as dedicated and reliable comrades.

- The concepts of a free space and a safe space, respectively, are often confounded. Safe spaces, that is, spaces where people can count on finding care and support, are needed in the world we live in. But they are spaces that fulfill a certain purpose. They are not the

free spaces we seek to establish, that is, spaces in which people speak their mind, engage in debate, and commonly solve the problems that arise in the process. What makes people safe in the long run is the collective ability to negotiate boundaries. Absolute safety is impossible. Vulnerabilities, misunderstandings, and irritations are part of social life and will not disappear even in the most anarchist of societies.

- The idea that everyone should be allowed to do everything is confused with the idea that everyone is able do everything. The introduction of skills or the passing on of knowledge by experienced activists and organizers is scoffed at. This leads to encountering the same pitfalls and reinventing the wheel over and over again.

- There exists an almost complete lack of vision and strategic orientation in the anarchist movement. In addition, organizational structures are in crisis. Spontaneity, the affinity group model, and a romanticized understanding of multiplicity have become hegemonic. All of these notions are riddled with flaws. The only longterm communities they allow consist of a handful of friends, which is an insufficient basis for the organizing required for broad social change. The main answer to this from within the anarchist movement, namely platformism, underestimates the importance of individual responsibility, which leads to a confusion of formality with efficiency (we will return to this in the final chapter).

What needs to be done?

The anarchist subculture is widespread. It enjoys a solid infrastructure and a steady flow of new recruits (albeit with a high turnover). It is easily able to sustain itself, it provides an identitarian haven for folks rejecting "mainstream", "bourgeois", or "straight" culture, and it has all the advantages that subcultures have (see above). Anarchism also produces influential ideas, inspiring forms of social interaction, and a lively culture of protest. All of this makes for an exciting political playground and confirms the relevance of anarchism in everyday life. So, if the lack of a revolutionary perspective doesn't bother us, there is not much to worry about. The subculture is not threatened by the problems listed above. But if we find that giving up a revolutionary perspective is too much of a sacrifice (and if we don't want to lose anarchist comrades with strong revolutionary commitments to orthodox Marxism), we need to make the development of such a perspective possible. Here are some suggestions:

1. Anarchists have to be clear about what they want and honest about what they can do.

2. The will to change society must be more important than promoting your identity as a holier-than-thou radical.

3. Anarchists have to speak in ways that people who are not part of an initiated scene are able to understand. Language is always in flux and problematic expressions must be challenged, but anarchist discussions need to be engaging not alienating.

4. We need visions. Contrary to what's become a mantra for many anarchists, visions are not blueprints trying to dictate people's behavior. Anarchist visions simply outline concrete

ideas about what anarchists want. Without formulating such ideas, no one outside anarchist circles will give a damn about what anarchists have to say. To constantly prefigure is not enough. At some point, it is time to figure.

5. Strategy has been misconstrued as a rigid activist master plan. To develop strategy simply means to have a proposal for how to achieve what you want to achieve. If you give this up, you give up revolutionary work.

6. There is no contradiction between building autonomous structures and intervening in the dominant order. This is a bogus conflict that is unnecessary and hurtful. The same is true for the alleged conflict between personal praxis ("lifestyle") and collective organizing. One strengthens the other.

7. We need a transformation of values. As long as we want all the stuff that is produced, we will not be able to downsize the political and economic system to a level that is both ecologically and socially sustainable.

8. A critique of technology must be a part of any revolutionary movement. Technology makes people dependent on systems they have no control over and require a complexity of social organization impossible to maintain on a grassroots level. We need to reject nuclear power and other supposed blessings holding the earth and humankind hostage, question progress as an indispensable means of making the world a better place, scrutinize rationalism and science, and focus on small-scale communities.

9. If you ask anarchists why they focus more on certain struggles than on others, the most usual reply is that "all struggles are important". But that's no answer to the question. The issue is not whether all struggles are important (of course they are), but why we prioritize some over others. Yes, subjective factors play a role: you focus on the struggles that most concern you or that you feel most competent in. Yet, if we claim to be revolutionaries, we also need to identify the struggles that hold the strongest revolutionary promise. Moral urgency does not necessarily correlate with revolutionary potential. Most struggles are not revolutionary in themselves, they need to be made revolutionary through concrete connections to revolutionary politics.

10. The embrace of diversity has always been one of anarchism's strengths, but it must not become an excuse for neglecting analysis. Any nonsense can be justified with the "need for diversity", as if this was a blank check for doing whatever you want. For example, not all tactics are equally useful at any given time; they have to be chosen according to our possibilities and the specific situation at hand. What do we want? Who is involved? What can realistically be done? What are our means? Diversity is good when it stands for openness, flexibility, and a range of options. But if it is celebrated as a virtue in itself, radical politics becomes like neoliberal shopping: you pick whatever tickles your fancy.

11. Open discussion is essential for both a fruitful intellectual environment and processes of liberation. When people say or do things that others consider problematic, they need to be involved in discussion rather than scolded, disciplined, or silenced.

12. Labels are a no-go for many anarchists. "It's not important what you call yourself, it's important what you do." At face value this seems convincing. However, a label is but a word, words are tools for communication, and in communication we are reliant on shorthands. Putting a label on the contents of our politics allows others — friends and foes — to get an idea of what we stand for. This is how we build community and solidarity. There would have never been a "communist threat" had there not been a word for it. It is important for a social movement of like-minded people to have a common name.

13. We need to build organizations that are anarchist in nature — and openly so — but able to play a crucial role in broader social movements and people's organizations (trade unions, tenant unions, consumer groups, sports associations, etc.). Anarchist organizations need to provide a network for discussion, common action, and mutual support. While this requires a certain degree of formality, formality must not be confused with efficiency. Efficiency always relies on the individual qualities of the organization's members, that is, responsibility, reliability, and accountability. This is why platformism is no answer to the crisis in anarchist organizing. We need something more adaptable.

14. The importance of individual qualities must be taken seriously. If we reject top-down mechanisms to ensure that things get done, people must be committed to doing them themselves. The anarchist reality is far from this. Many anarchists only do things when they "feel inspired to"; many have all sorts of opinions about what others should do without ever doing anything themselves; many are unreliable and irresponsible, loving to denounce those calling them on their conduct as "authoritarians"; many use meetings for egocentric babble rather than sensible decision-making. If these tendencies prevail, there is no hope for anarchism to ever become a revolutionary movement.

15. There needs to be a new synthesis in anarchism. People with different focuses — the workplace, patriarchy, militarism, and so forth — need to work together, unite around a shared set of principles, and agree on a common strategy in which their different tactics are coordinated in the most beneficial way. Exclusive claims to anarchist representation do everyone harm, the respective group included.

16. Anarchists need to understand the limits of anarchists politics. Depending on the goals of a specific struggle, a social democratic or Leninist approach might be more appropriate. Defending the welfare state is a reformist struggle, and if anarchists deem it worthwhile, they might be most effective as extra-parliamentary support troops to social democratic efforts. Likewise, Indian farmers might consider a protracted people's war — and therefore Leninism in its Maoist variety — the most promising response to the state repression they are facing; if anarchists want to support these farmers, they'll have to make ideological concessions. Sectarianism within the Left needs to go, and anarchists have to do their part.

17. Many anarchists associate cadres exclusively with Leninist politics. This is unfortunate. Essentially, a cadre is but a full-time organizer, and there's a difference between a full-time organizer and a weekend activist. Cadres deserve no privileges but their experiences and dedication need to be recognized — not for their own sake but for the sake of the movement. Cadres also need to prepare for revolutionary situations, the lack of which has been one of anarchism's biggest historical weaknesses.

18. Stubbornly avoiding discussions about leadership hurts the anarchist movement. There are always leaders in social groups, whether you use the name or not. Only when this is acknowledged can the authoritarian and exploitative aspects of leadership be kept at bay. Otherwise, they will work in non-transparent and unaccountable ways, which is characteristic of many anarchist groups.

19. We must be aware of anarchism's origins. Anarchism holds no monopoly on antiauthoritarian thought, which, in various shapes and forms, can be found across all cultures and ages. Yet, anarchism as a self-professed political movement is a product of the socio-political conditions of nineteenth-century Europe. This has cultural implications that characterize the movement to this day and prevent it from spreading the way most anarchists would like it to. The answer is not to claim that all antiauthoritarian currents are essentially "anarchist" (which, in the worst case, is a form of colonial co-optation; if people choose not to use the name "anarchism" for their politics, they have a reason). The answer is rather for anarchists to prove that they are worthy collaborators in a global struggle for liberation.

20. So-called ally politics can serve as a guiding principle for anarchists involved in social struggles carried by others, but the concept needs to be understood right. To mindlessly say yes to what someone else demands of you is self-abnegation and has nothing to do with radicalism. Besides, no one individual or group ever represents a community, so we can never surrender our own responsibility to make decisions by referring to someone else's authority. We need to be accountable for the decisions we make. It can be mandatory to accept others' leadership in struggle, but we always need to critically engage with them in order to collectively bring the struggle forward.

21. We need serious discussions about the possibilities and impossibilities of armed struggle; not a childish romanticization of rioting or crime, but an investigation into how power is distributed and maintained, and how this can be challenged militantly, which, in most cases of deepened social conflict, will be necessary. Furthermore, if we are really serious about revolution, we cannot make the army and the police the perpetual enemy. Almost all revolutions were reliant on bringing parts of the army and the police into their ranks, and the military options of guerrilla groups are decreasing drastically in times of high-tech warfare. This is a reality we need to deal with, no matter how uncomfortable it is.

22. We need to reconsider economic compensation. DIY culture is formidable in preserving independence, encouraging creativity, and nurturing resourcefulness. However, once the boundary to self-exploitation has been crossed, it is almost exclusively middle-class folks (predominantly male, predominantly white) who remain.

23. Pursuing revolution for revolution's sake is pointless. The only thing justifying a revolution is that it makes people's lives better. This must be reflected in everything revolutionaries do.

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