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For Ourselves
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A Contribution to the Concrete Imagination of Proletarian Revolution
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same basic picture, the same image or imagination of the result intended, and of the process. And telepathy is not today a normal self-power of the average social individual. Hence, the need for the conscious production and communication of *theory*: the deliberate *production of inter-subjectivity*, beginning with internal dissemination of imaginations within the group of revolutionaries itself, which is the very *process of formation* of a shared imagination itself. Theory is nothing other than such a *moving image* of practice, a reflection of and upon practice; *practical imagination*, as well as a set of rules or guidelines for the formation and improvement-by-criticism of such imaginations so that they will be *use-valuable* (*practice-able*); rules derived through the testing of imagination in previous practical experience. (This totality of rules and guidelines is called *method*, *meta-theory*, i.e., the theory of the practice of theory-making). Within all this it should be remembered that the "main special difficulty" spoken of above is also the special difficulty of social*ist* or actually, *social* production itself — of social*ized* production *in general*, so that here again, the necessary prelude to the process (of social revolution) is also a preparation for its outcome. We are working on society. But "society" includes us. So, yes — we are working on ourselves.

The revolutionary process can be conceived as a chain of ever-deepening *negations* of capitalist production, of *capital* production, of *capital itself*.

(1): The strike or *general*(ized) *strike* is the first level of negation of capital production we will deal with. The workers stay home and production grinds to a halt. They have negated capitalist work. But only at a still very superficial level (and therefore also *only temporarily*). They have negated capitalist production because they have stopped any, all production. This is the *abstract negation* of capitalist production (abstract relative to the other levels of negation we will be imagining). Capitalist production is replaced only by no production at all; an abstract nothingness of production. This cannot go on (or society will die). This negation must in its turn be negated, either by a return to production under the old conditions and under the old private capitalist or state capitalist management — the non-revolutionary return — or by a return to production under a new management: workers' management — the revolutionary return. But a return to production there must be.

(2): The next stage of negation which negates the mere work stoppage but which still carries within it the seed of revolutionary possibility, is the workplace occupation. This is the negation of the first negation: the workers stop staying home. This seizure of the grounds of production is already an attack on State or private property, i.e., on capital. It is already, though still only at the most superficial and rudimentary level, *de facto* expropriation — an incipient revolutionary socialization of the means of producing society. The workers come back to the place of work, but the work stoppage continues. However, in this action the workers have gone beyond their dispersed, atomized state formerly, of merely staying home. They have concentrated themselves at the point of production, a social place, and have thus constituted on a yet more realized level the society within production and within the production

process which they already formed "in-itself" under normal conditions.

But still the work stoppage, the strike, continues. The old production has been negated, but not in a way which replaces it with a *new* production. The *determinate* negation of capital-production, the negation of capital-production *as such* has not been produced, but only its abstract negation; non-production.

Proletarian revolution, that is, the practice of the critique of political economy; the practical negation of political economy and of its object, capital, would mean the resumption of *use-value*[1] production but freed more and more from the stamp

[1] The "use-value" spoken of here is not the same as the "use-value" existing originally, in primitive communist societies, prior to the emergence of (its) exchange-value. Communist production is not conceivable ("conceptable;" thinkable) as a simple reversion to the production of use-value as it existed before capitalist society. It must be grasped as a *cumulative* development *beyond* capitalism — a supersession — not a regression; an advance which conserves and builds further upon certain *irreversible results* of capitalist development. The dialectic of the historical antithesis of use-value and exchange-value, like other dialectics, follows not a (viciously) circular but a *helical* course. No such one-sided solution as a relapse into primitive use-value is possible. The "use-value" we speak of here refers not to a retrograde return to the "thesis" but rather to the *synthesis* of use-value and exchange-value. It would perhaps be simplest to call this synthesis merely "value" — the intersection or *singularity* of "use-value" and "exchange-value" — except that this would conflict with Marx's usage in *Capital* and thus introduce a new confusion. We propose instead the name *social use-value* as opposed to simple "use-value," by which we understand *private* use-value.

The appropriateness of this terminology becomes readily visible when we consider the question of the use-value of machinery. The use-value of industrial machinery in capitalist society is its use-value to a capitalist. Nobody else buys it. For him (or her) it is, like any means of production, including those made of flesh and blood, and indeed like every branch and variety of industry itself, merely a means to one singular end: profit — means of production of money. Its use-value in producing exchange-value, in "making money," is all that counts. But in a socialist society just emerging out of capitalist society, the old machines will still have a use-value, though their old use-value as described above will obviously have been destroyed. But this use-value equally obviously cannot be an immediately individual, private

The above is true of human production-processes *in general*, individual and collective. But of *no* production-process is it *so* true as of the process of the collective and *conscious* production of a social revolution; the collective and conscious production of a new society. This insight has been almost totally ignored in the history of revolutionary theory and practice up until now as can be seen in the threadbare and cloudy conceptions most revolutionaries have had regarding what they wanted and what they were working on. The situation has been exacerbated by the necessity of bureaucratic groups to actively conceal their real intentions in this regard, namely, their own dictatorial domination.

Let's dispense with the anti-fetish about "blueprints" once and for all. We've got to know what we want and what we are trying to produce *in advance* and *as concretely as possible* every step of the way, or we simply *don't know what we're doing*. We can't even know that we can't get what we want, and will have to revise our intentions, until we can imagine and formulate what we want *concretely*. We've got to *imagine in advance* what the process of social revolution must look like; to *imagine in advance* what communist society must lock like, based on the images of our social experience and its laws which we already have in our heads, and then submit these *coherent imaginations* to constant improving criticism, including especially the *practical* criticism provided by new outbreaks of and advances in revolutionary practice created by other sections of the world proletariat, as well as by our own praxis. We must then use these concrete imaginations, tempered and forged with the hammer of practical criticism, to inform and guide our praxis.

The main *special* difficulty involved in the kind of pre-imagination requisite to *revolutionary* production is, that since the direction of the collective praxis cannot be authoritarian — in which case, only one person, the Leader, or a few, would have to possess the mental template — all of the individuals associated in the collective production project must share the

of capital, includes the negation of the capitalist city[13] as a form of the centralization and accumulation of capital.

We have seen that "the negation of capital" and the "total transformation of society" are inseparable concepts. Thus, when the situationists speak of proletarian revolution as "the total transformation of the world," this is no mere phrase, but is meant *seriously* and *literally*, and emerges out of the conceptual and historical logic of the theory of praxis itself. The complete negation of capital can mean nothing less.

Appendix: Concrete Imagination

"We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his *modus operandi*, and to which he must subordinate his will." — Karl Marx, *Capital Volume I*, New World, p. 178

[13] "The foundation of every division of labour which is well-developed, and brought about by the exchange of commodities, is the separation between town and country. It may be said, that the whole economic history of society is summed up in the movement of this antithesis." — Karl Marx, *Capital Volume I*, (New World, p. 352)

"…abolition of the antithesis between town and country is not merely possible… The present poisoning of the air, water, and land can only be put an end to by the fusion of town and country… The great towns will perish." — Frederich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, (New World, p. 323)

and the determinations of the social relations of *exchange-value* production, and, in particular of *capital-value* production.

The deeper negation of capital-production requires the negation of its partial and shallower negations. The question of the determinate form of this deeper negation poses itself with increasing vividness as the fallacy of the abstract negation of production manifests itself more and more urgently in the shortage of vital goods and services — food, medical care, etc. There is no alternative. What is required is the negation of the original negation; stoppage of the work stoppage.

(3): But it is here that basically two alternative modes of this re-negation present themselves. On the one hand, there is the return to normal production and to the old production-relations and therefore to all the conditions which necessitated the strike in the first place, and so also to the necessity of striking again, and of breaking off the strike again, and again, and again *ad infinitum* — the lived myth of Sisyphus; the futility of

one. It is directly not an *individual* but a *social* use-value. Only *indirectly*, mediately, is it an individual use-value. The machine eventually "becomes" articles of personal consumption: the use of the machine, which *uses it up* (*consumes* it; wears it out), results in such products. Later, when the process of production has become also an aesthetic process, and when machines have been designed by the producers as direct means of self-development, self-expression, and self-realization, the machine gains a new kind of immediate utility, and becomes a kind of "consumer good" in its own right. But its use here also is not by an isolated individual; it is a use in association with others; an associated use — a social use.

Exchange-value was precisely the early means to the *socialization of private use-value* and *private production* (cf. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie*, McLellan excerpts, pp. 145–146). The machine is, on the contrary, and aside from association or social-relation itself, the very means of *social* production: the *social tool* par excellence. Its use, and therefore its use-value, can only be a social one. Exchange-value is thus the historically mediating term between two forms of use-value, a "higher" and a "lower" form. It is the historical means of the *socialization* of use-value. The form of use-value which comes after the dominance of exchange-value must, in *negating* exchange-value as such, conserve its socializing moment ("*aufgehoben*").

living in a vicious circle. Or, something new. A way of breaking out of the vicious circle: to restart production *under their own control*; "under new management" — workers' management — the power of workers' councils.

The new system of workers' management can propagate itself throughout the whole society, as a self-amplifying, self-organizing system, in the following way: the necessity of restarting production falls sooner upon some areas of social production — electric power, food distribution — than upon others. If these vital sectors of production resume when necessity falls there under workers' council management, then this example is likely to spread to other sectors as the need to restart them in turn becomes necessity. And, as the momentum of the new pattern builds in its own wake, production may be restarted in more and more sectors even ahead of dire necessity, with the new form of management the central point of the action, and not merely a response to immediate necessity. This development would mark the transition into social revolution, the onset of the society-wide process of capital expropriation.

The workers have a choice of returning to the old management, or of constituting their own management. The latter alternative demands an act of great courage.[2] It will also mean

[2] As Debord put its "Proletarian revolution depends entirely on the condition that, for the first time, theory as intelligence of human practice be recognized and lived by the masses. It requires workers to become dialecticians and to inscribe their thought into practice." (*The Society of the Spectacle*, §123)

The times are not without signs of this advent. For example, during the recent truckers' strike and road-blockading, one trucker was heard to remark, "The smallest trucking company in the world, the individual truck driver, has finally spoken; now he's the biggest trucking company in the world." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Friday, December 8, 1973, p.8). The truckers in general form an interesting case: they know the interconnection of capitalist production, the production-functions, in practice because *they make the connections.*

fect the longer capital develops on its own basis, transforming both nature and inherited social conditions into congruency with its own imperatives. The central thing to remember is that, as hired labourers, the population produces not *for itself*, on behalf of its own desires and intentions, but on behalf of capital — acting, in fact — *as capital* deploying itself. The concentration of population is a part of the concentration of capital, for the proletariat is a part of capital ("variable capital").[12] The capitalist city is an accumulation of capital; it is the organization of fixed capital, the very form of its "geographical distribution." It is the *material body* and embodiment of capital; *capital as a city* and *the city as capital.* It is the city *of* capital. This is all the more true in the *planned* city of unified state-capital, even though the absolute concentration of capital in the state and the *attempt* in bureaucratic planning to negate and surmount the spontaneous movement of the economy (the law of value) contains the unfinished beginning of the negation of capital. The negation of capital as state-capital is only the negation of capitalism *within capitalism.* Thus, the concept of the negation

[12] "On the other hand, that part of capital, represented by labour-power, does, in the process of production, undergo an alteration of value. It both reproduces the equivalent of its own value, and also produces an excess, a surplus-value, which may itself vary, may be more or less according to circumstances. This part of capital is continually being transformed from a constant into a variable magnitude. I therefore call it the variable part of capital, or, shortly, *variable capital.* The same elements of capital which, from the point of view of the labour-process, present themselves respectively as the objective and subjective factors, as means of production and labor-power, present themselves, from the point of view of the process of creating surplus-value, as constant and variable capital." — Karl Marx, *Capital Volume I*, (New World, p. 209)

Capital becomes the pseudo-subject of history because we collectively alienate — that is, we *sell* — our subjectivity to capital. Wage-labour is *sold labour*, that is, *alienated labour*. Capital is *accumulated alienated labour* in the process of accumulating more of itself. Capital appears to have subjective powers because we alienate (sell) our subjective powers — in the form of labour-power — to capital. The pseudo-subjectivity of capital is the alienated subjectivity of the proletariat. We, as proletarians, produce an alien world — the world of capital — by selling our daily lives, our energies, our self-powers to capital for uses which we do not decide; for the uses and purposes of capital, or rather, of the human representatives bound to its imperatives — capitalists, managers, state-bureaucrats. It is they who *directly* enforce the imperatives of exchange-value over those of use-value. However, the reproduction of capitalist daily life as a whole by the whole proletariat enforces those imperatives indirectly, and reproduces the enforcers and their power to enforce. The negation of capital means the *dis*-alienation of the producers and the accumulated means of production; our reowning of capital; the return of subjectivity to the real subjects.

It means people collectively deciding how they shall use their energies; the democratic planning of the production of their world by the associated producers; the federated councils, and later, the federated communes. The negation of capital will thus be the *beginning* of *human* history, of the history according to desire.

The phrase "self-deployment of capital" becomes transparent through certain examples. For instance, it is obvious that the geographical distribution of population must follow the geographical distribution of capital — of money, markets, *jobs* — insofar as the "population" is principally *the proletariat*, while at the same time it reacts back on the distribution of capital, together with certain natural factors as well as, initially, the historical inheritance of pre-capitalist demography. But capital's spatial organization becomes more and more its own ef-

that *arms factories* must have been occupied and then restarted under workers' management with the specific goal of arming the working class (the entire populace) against whatever violence the state will be able to bring to bear against the new social relations. And this will, in turn, depend upon the degree of erosion of authority achieved within the any, the cowardice of the police, and upon all the factors on which these, in turn, depend.

The *occupation* followed by *operation* of their workplaces by the workers is already the expropriation of capitalist private property, the "expropriation of the expropriators." It already accomplishes the social appropriation or *subjective socialization* of the means of production. The process up to this point is already "the negation of capital." But this is not at all the deepest level which this negation and this socialization can or must achieve. If workers' management is conceived to be the management by the workers of the *same old* workplaces and the *same old* daily lives — of basically the *same old* society by the *same old* workers — same cities, same housing styles, same stores, etc. etc. *then nothing has been understood*! The goal of workers' management is the management of the existing world by the workers just as much as the goal of a prisoners' revolt is "prisoners' management of the prison." The point is to *break out of* the prison of capital; to *tear down the walls* of its factories to *dissolve* the old structure so as to resolve it into a new one.[3]

(4): The *operation* of the factories, offices, social services, etc. under workers' and communities' management leads in-

[3] "This occupation is different from the one the workers did in 1920. In 1920 they said let's occupy, but let's work. Let's show everybody that we can run production ourselves. Things are different today. In our occupation, the factory is a starting point for the revolutionary organization of workers — not a place to work!" (Italian worker from Mirafiori, quoted in "Italy, 1973: Workers' Struggles in the Capitalist Crisis" — *Radical America* 7:2 March-April 1973, p. 31)

evitably to their conscious (as well as unconscious) *modification*. With practice, this becomes a *systematic modification* in congruence with a new pattern of social relations, that is, in accord with the constantly more generalized and constantly more richly rediscovered *coherence* of the new social totality. Generalized self-management, as the process-of-negation of capital, has to be a practical critique of the entire layout, of the whole deployment of "capital goods" and of the total physical plant inherited from capital-society. It means the critical reconstruction of all the daily relations of use and appropriation. Most of all, it means the metamorphosis of the entire *capitalist form of technology*; because technology as capital can only be *capital as a technology*. The existing factory, the existing organization of machinery, is merely *the adequate material form of capital*.[4] Capitalist technology is the materialization, the *objectification*, of capitalist social relations of production; of the

[4] "In machinery, objectified labour appears not only in the form of a product, or of a product utilized as a means of labour, but also in the force of production itself. The development of the means of labour into machinery is not fortuitous for capital; it is the historical transformation of the traditional means of labour into means adequate for capitalism… Thus machinery appears as the *most adequate form of fixed capital*; and the latter, in so far as capital can be considered as being related to itself, is the most adequate form of capital, in general…. Thus, the full development of capital does not take place — in other words, capital has not set up the means of production corresponding to itself — until the means of labour is not only formally determined as fixed capital, but has been transcended in its direct form, and fixed capital in the shape of a machine is opposed to labour within the production process… But if capital only adequately displays its nature as use-value within the production process in the form of machinery and other material forms of fixed capital, railways, for example (we shall return to this later), this never means that this use-value (machinery by itself) *is* capital, or that machinery can be regarded as synonymous with capital; any more than gold would cease to have usefulness as gold, if it were no longer used as money. Machinery does not lose its use-value when it ceases to be capital. From the fact that machinery is the most suitable form of the use-value of fixed capital, it does not follow that its subordination to the social relations of capitalism is the most suitable and final social production relationship for the utilization

omy, the critique of capital *in acts*. The physical plant of capitalist society objectifies the social relation of production of capitalist society — *capital*, by name. The social revolution which consolidates a new social relation of production — the workers' council and its federation, or simply "association" — and a new mode of production — self-management — must likewise be the process of the objectification of these new social relations, of the bringing of the physical body of society into congruency with its new basis.

The theorem of the correspondence of the physical plant, the organized space-time of society with its root social relations, is an *historical* truth, as well as a conceptual truth based — as it is — on the *historical concept* of capital. The *history of capital*, including necessarily its *pre*history (of primitive accumulation in the most expanded sense), is the alienated *history of man*. The discovery of this inversion of subject and objectification is the deepest secret of the Marxian critique, of Marx's revelation of and solution to the riddle of history. Capital is the reality of Hegel's "Weltegeiste;" the rational kernel within the shell of Hegel's mystification is the reflection of its actual historical process. Hegel's mystification was only an *insufficiently critical* acceptance of *real reification* at face value. As capitalism, the social world evolves as "the self-deployment of capital", that is, of a pseudo-subjectivity alien to human desires, while human daily life becomes a pseudo-objectivity characterized by an apparently externally imposed routine and boredom; by a blindness of human beings to the economic and social laws which *they produce* which are the result of *their own praxis*. And all of this is already contained in the relation of wage-labour, the capital-relation itself.

tory dialogue. And the power of the councils, which can only be effective by transforming the totality of existing conditions, cannot assign itself a smaller task if it wants to be recognized and *to recognize itself* in its world." — Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, § 179, (Black & Red, Detroit, 1973)

But the completion of the process of the self-negation of capital involves more and goes further than any of these. Its thorough imagination can give us a glimpse of what communist society, according to the inner logic of these concepts (and, of course, without this imaginational logic *in itself* guaranteeing its realization, i.e. that its *coherence* will become *praxis*) must look like. The concept of the negation of capital is as "big" as the concept of capital itself. And the concept of capital is "bigger" than any of the negations we have described. "Capital" is the name of the *totality* of capitalist society.[9] Capitalist society is society as capital. The whole terrain, the entire deployment of capital-society is included in its concept, i.e., *objectifies capital*.[10] The whole of capitalist society is the *objective body of capital*. And the negation of this entire objective structure and layout of the physical plant of capitalist society is included in the negated concept of capital.

Proletarian revolution as the practical-critique of "human geography"[11] is still just the practical critique of political econ-

[9] "*The relations of production in their totality constitute what is called the social relations, society…* Capital is a social relation of production. It is a *bourgeois relation of production*, a relation of production of bourgeois society." — Karl Marx, *Wage-Labour and Capital*, (International Publishers, p. 29)

[10] The competition between capitalist firms over space, over landed property, over the acquisition of privileged sites both with respect to markets and to natural resources is an aspect of the competition of capitals and comes under its general law. The spatial allocation resulting from this competitive action objectifies that law (i.e., makes it visible; materializes it; "maps" it onto the world-manifold).

[11] "The history which threatens this twilight world is also the force which could subject space to lived time. Proletarian revolution is the *critique of human geography* through which individuals and communities must construct the places and events corresponding to the appropriation, no longer only of their labour, but of their total history." — Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, § 178, (Black & Red, Detroit, 1973)

"The greatest revolutionary idea with respect to urbanism is not itself urbanist, technological, or aesthetic. It is the decision to reconstruct the environment completely in accordance with the needs of the power of the workers' councils, of the *anti-state dictatorship* of the proletariat, of execu-

capital-relation itself (i.e., of the inversion of subject and object, of the producer and her product). The machine dominates the worker; the machine-object controls and *appropriates* the pacified subject, not the other way around. This is the lived essence of the relation of fetishism, of reification, of *alienation* between living wo/men and the dead things which they create.[5] The machinery of capitalist society embodies in its total

of machinery." — Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Oekononie*, McLellan excerpts pp. 134.-136.)

Also, in a very interesting letter-to-the-editor of *New Solidarity*, reprinted in the December 7, 1973 issue, from a machinist member of the Labour Committees, we find the following emergence of this same insight: "No way can the presently existing junk called production be used to create socialist self-expanding production. Our present production method will grind workers down no matter who runs the economy…" and; "Talk about the Alternative Industrial System leads us to a definition of a socialist machine. A socialist machine is a process that lets the worker go home, or to school, in a better condition than when he started the job. In other words, a socialist machine creates 'surplus' in the worker, by stimulating his intellectual processes, expanding his world outlook and helping him reach problems and solutions that he never knew existed before. It also has to leave him in a better physical condition after he works than before." (Jim C., Boston Local, NCLC, November 11, 1973: "A Machinist's View of Machines," 4:34 — December 7, 1973, p. 6.)

[5] As the process of proletarianization spreads throughout society, and as more and more areas vital to social reproduction come under the sway of capital, or, at least, of capitalist practices, this relation between machine and worker is reproduced and extended into new areas. For example, private capitalist hospitals like Kaiser which practice the "industrialization of medicine" and the "proletarianization of doctors" for cost-effectiveness reasons administer a routine physical examination called the "multi-phasic" as a series of semi-automated tests wherein the patient is passed down a kind of "assembly line" by the medial workers. For another example, the majority of IBM System 360 computers are in business use as a kind of *glorified typewriter*, a robot main clerk handling routine accounting and paperwork chores and forms-output, since they can "type" faster than any human secretary or typist, not to mention figure. The workers in the modern *computerized bureaucracy* now in formation, especially the programmers and operators, relate to the equipment in a hybridized bureaucratic-industrial manner. The clean, clear, and sweatless atmosphere of the emerging capitalist computer

design the *intentionality* of the capital-praxis, which is the subordination of the production of *use-value* to the production of *exchange-value* in the form of *capital*, capital-value (eg., money profit, surplus-value).

The hardwares produced by capitalist society bear the stamp and the etchings of capitalist social relations in their deepest substance and structure because these social relations were in fact their shaping and molding milieu, and the social imperatives of the capital-creating praxis were the decisive motives behind their creation. They represent not at all *absolute use-value* which can simply be "freed" from the hold of purely external exchange-relations, remaining unsullied in that process. They are social use-value as perverted and disfigured within the capital-relation — by exchange-value and commodity-relations. The dominance of exchange-value always means *the sacrifice of use-value to exchange-value*. Proletarian revolution, as the beginning of the end of exchange-value, can only mean the *rite of sacrifice* of exchange-value to social use-value: the exorcism of *the world of exchange-value* in the construction of *the world of use-value* and the use-value of life.

The process of proletarian revolution is that of the ever-deepening negation of capital, which is identical with the ever-deepening *self*-negation of the proletariat and of proletarianization itself. We have followed in imagination the train of events which make up the coherence of this process and their concrete logic to the point of the conscious modification

facility may be taken as anticipatory of, if in a one-sided and distorted way, the working conditions appropriate to communist industry. In general, the business computer or "intelligent typewriter," for use in the automation and cost-reduction of *bureaucratic labour* and the industrial process control computer, for use in the automation and cost-reduction of *industrial labour*, seem to be the fullest-yet objectification of the human subject, and an even more adequate form of fixed capital than any machines known in Marx's time. This is especially true to the extent that computers continue to develop in the direction of a kind of "universal machine."

places; from *occupying* workplaces to *operating* workplaces; and from *operating* workplaces to *modifying* workplaces. This process must finally lead, in the case of the *factory* type of workplace, to the negation of the factory *as a whole* and to the negation of the factory *as such*, a process which can only go on in the context of larger changes in the deployment of society — of social objects and of objective wealth — outside the factory. The "negation of the factory" may at first mean its physical destruction, its dismantling and reconstruction elsewhere, and perhaps producing a different or modified product. This would be the case, for example, with factories involved in waste production, such as those of the enormous armaments industries which could not be turned to the arming of the proletariat. It might mean the dismantling of certain factories and the dispersal of their components to various sites where new factories, of a kind that would have never been built under capitalism, are under construction by the council power, for example, as part of the de-urbanization process. Ultimately it must mean the determinate negation of the factory *as such*; the supersession of the old specialized factory altogether, to be replaced by a new kind of unitary complex at the productive nucleii of the communes, that is, of the new types of settlement-pattern, neither (both) urban nor (and) rural, which are bound to emerge out of the revolutionary process, as the synthesis of city and countryside, that is, as the supersession of their historical antithesis and contradiction.[8]

[8] "The foundation of every division of labour which is well-developed, and brought about by the exchange of commodities, is the separation between town and country. It may be said, that the whole economic history of society is summed up in the movement of this antithesis." — Karl Marx, *Capital Volume I*, (New World, p. 352)

"…abolition of the antithesis between town and country is not merely possible… The present poisoning of the air, water, and land can only be put an end to by the fusion of town and country… The great towns will perish." — Frederich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, (New World, p. 323)

We have followed the coherence of the self-negation[7] process of capital from *striking* workplaces to *occupying* work-

[7] Why do we say "the *self*-negation of capital?" Self-negation (internal negation; immanent negation) is the general mode of *dialectical* negation, of dialectical self-movement in general. But how it it true in this case? It is true in a double sense. There is both a subjective, "for-itself," and an objective, "in-itself" tendency to self-termination within capital. First, subjectively, in the very accumulation of the proletariat itself *quantitatively* and *qualitatively*, in the *association* or *social-relation* within the proletariat and within the production-process which accumulate with it. The *final act* in this process envisioned here, occurring after production has more and more been put into the hands of *associated proletarians* by the capital-process itself, is the storming of capital *from within* by the proletariat as incorporated within capital — as *variable capital* — at the point of production: the seizure of all workplaces, which are held as *productive capital* by the workers there, thereby rendering them no longer capital, but *social property*; *socialized* property, and *expropriated* (negated) *capital*. It is the uprising of variable capital putting an end to both itself and constant capital *as capital*, or precisely nothing other than the self-negation of capital. But we do not imagine that the development of the subjective side alone is sufficient to occasion or precipitate its own finality; to determine the moment and transform its growing *potentiality* into actuality; its growing *need* into *necessity*. On the objective side, the *quantitative* consequences of the *qualitative* trend of the *objective socialization of the means of production* (the predominance of *social tools*; the development of machinery, of "mechanization" or "automation") in terms of the relationship of surplus-value to total invested capital, tends to bring about a slowdown of the accumulation process as a result of the accumulation process itself, impending *termination* of the process, or its reversal (disaccumulation; cannibalization; contracted social reproduction) as a limit, this expressing itself as "the law of the tendency of-the rate of profit to fall," and lurching the system toward breakdown ("depression") and stagnation, which is resolved through (1) the elephantiasic growth of unproductive sectors (the "Spectacle"); (2) the transformation of private capital into state capital, and; (3) proletarian revolution. This tendency of capital to brake its own accumulation; the self-causation of a long-term slowdown in the rate of accumulation, is the tendency to the self-negation of capital *in-itself*. The coupling and inter-causation of the in-itself and for-itself tendencies forms the self-negation process as a whole, and alone gives it determinacy or any sense of "necessity." (It should be remembered that a collapse into barbarism at a pre-capitalist level of the productive forces, nuclear a-ecological annihilation, or a long period of totalitarian state-capitalism, fascist or Stalinist, forms a fourth possible outcome of this process: indeterminate negation).

of the material forms associated with capital-relations and produced out of them. We have seen that proletarian revolution must be the practical critique of the machine, of *capitalist technology* in general. The design and organization of the work environment by the people who do the work cannot help but be this critique. And the desire which propels it is the desire *to enjoy* the work-process. The means of production will be designed by them to meet their needs not only as "*consumers*" but also as "*producers*". Each "producer" is, while a producer, also identically a consumer, consuming during production raw materials and machinery, as well as *him or herself*, his or her own lifetime and energy; his or her body. Each "consumer" is, while a consumer, simultaneously a producer; a *self*-producer, producing him or herself through consuming social wealth produced by him or herself and others. The *total* process, consumption and production taken together, is the process named *social reproduction*.

The full socialization of the means of production means that the production process must itself become valuable as a social life process. The means must become also the end; an end in themselves as well as a means. The people who live daily within the production process can be expected to demand of themselves that their process produce social use-value *for them* and not merely *for others*, or for themselves only as "consumers," i.e. for their lives outside the immediate production process. The production process must do more than yield a use-value concentrated in the product, merely in the result, of the process. The producers can be expected to struggle to make the means of production produce value for them *within the production process itself* and not merely at its end. That is, they will have demanded that the production process within which they daily live produce a value for them as a daily social life; that it become a process of gratifying social intercourse, self-development, and self-realization. It must "add value" to the use-value of their daily life. It must produce and reproduce so-

cial life in an expanded sense, immediately as well as mediately, and no longer in the narrower sense confined to the individual reproductive consumption of a finished object, a product-object ("consumer good"). This is the *realization* of social use-value.

The capitalist workplace is an ugly and impoverished environment precisely because the workers have no voice in its design and, moreover, because its design is ruled by the imperatives of exchange-value production maximization, which prescribe cutting costs to maximize returns, i.e., new capital production (profit), through investing as little as possible in fixed capital and capital plant. Workers' self-management means that "efficiency" in quantitative output terms, "cost-effectiveness" within the confines of the old, monetized conception of "economy" and "economizing" will have to be superseded in a new, more generalized conception evaluating production in terms of the social use-value coherence or "efficiency" ("effectiveness;" "efficacy") of a given praxis within the deliberative, qualitatively sensitive, and subjectively referred milieu of the councils. The criterion for the critique and correction of productive praxis can no longer be merely the conception *of use-value from the point of view of exchange-value and exchange-value maximization* — that is, of use-value *to exchange-value* — which capitalist efficiency, at the deepest level, represents. The quantitative coherence of this planning process can be conceived in terms of the measurement of the social cost of production as *labour-cost*, that is, the measurement of production in terms of *life-hours*, of cost in terms of *life-time lost*; of the sacrifice or consumption of *time*. Its economy is an economy of time.[6]

[6] "If we suppose communal production, the determination of time remains, of course, essential. The less time society requires in order to produce wheat, cattle, etc., the more time it gains for other forms of production, material or intellectual. As with a single individual, the universality of its development, its enjoyment and its activity depends on saving time. In the final analysis, all forms of economics can be reduced to an economics of time. Likewise, society must divide up its time purposefully in order to achieve a production suited to its general needs; just as the individual has to divide his/her time in order to acquire, in suitable proportions, the knowledge s/he needs or to fulfill the various requirements of his/her activity.

"On the basis of community production, the first economic law remains the economy of time, and the methodical distribution of working time between the various branches of production; and this law becomes indeed of much greater importance. But all this differs basically from the measurement of exchange-values (labour and the products of labour) by labour time. The work of individuals participating in the same branch of activity, and the different kinds of labour are not only quantitatively but also qualitatively different. What is the precondition of a merely quantitative difference between things? The fact that their quality is the same. (Thus units of labour can be measured quantitatively only if they are of equal and identical quality.)" (The *Grundrisse* translated and edited by David McLellan, Harper & Row, 1971, pp 75–76)

"For real wealth is the developed productive force of all individuals. It is no longer the labour-time but the disposable time which is the measure of wealth. Labour-time as the measurement of wealth implies that wealth is founded on poverty…" (The *Grundrisse* translated and edited by David McLellan, Harper & Row, 1971, p. 145)