

A Revolutionary Leftist Theoretical Program - Postliterate - Medium

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The purpose of this short text is to outline a theoretical program which may offer guidance to revolutionary leftist movements — particularly anti-authoritarian ones — with the goal of solving issues within the mentality of many such groups today. It is not something to be imposed, but something to be ruthlessly critiqued and debated in the struggle for coherence of ideas in the revolutionary movement. Inspired by Chaz Bufe’s “Listen, Anarchist!” → <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/chaz-bufe-listen-anarchist>

1. Reject Nihilism — this means specifically rejection of defeatism and rejection of the view that humans are fundamentally corrupt. In its place, value high hopes for the flourishing of humanity and nature, out of intense love for both!
2. Reject Individualism & Egoism — this means rejection of the idea that an individual can or should attempt to exist alone. The dominant ideology thrives on individuating day-to-day struggles and on making us forget the power of collective struggle, which is necessary to break it. Freedom is not isolation, but the development of the social man. [1]
3. Reject Anti-Moralism — this means rejection of the view that all actions are morally equivalent, or that it is acceptable that an individual should be able to cause suffering on others for her own personal

pleasure. In its place, value the Wobbly maxim: “An injury to one is an injury to all!”

4. Reject Idealism — this means rejection of rigid plans for new societal construction and rejection of all utopias. In its place, ground political action in the realities of material conditions, both long-term and spontaneous, and accept Marx’s teaching that a future society cannot and should not be imagined whilst in the framework of the old, lest we risk recreating the old structures.
5. Reject Vanguardism — this means rejection of the view that a cadre of revolutionaries should rule govern the revolution. In its place, value propaganda of the deed, education, and the spontaneous creativity of the masses — else we will risk recreating oppressive dynamics. [2]
6. Reject Social Regression — this means rejection of all socially regressive ideas, particularly the establishment of primitivist or pre-industrial societies and the establishment of reactionary social codes. Society naturally progresses forward, thus we must use this momentum for good by allowing it to flourish in a direction which increases freedom, or else risk authoritarianism attempting to force it backwards. [3]

[1] From Errico Malatesta’s *Mutual Aid*:

“The strongest man is the one who is the least isolated; the most independent is the one who has most contacts and friendships and thereby a wider field for choosing his close collaborators; the most developed man is he who best can, and knows how to, utilise Man’s common inheritance as well as the achievements of his contemporaries.”

[2] From Mikhail Bakunin’s *The Illusion of Universal Suffrage*:

“The instincts of the rulers, whether they legislate or execute the laws, are — by the very fact of their exceptional position — diametrically opposite. However democratic may be their feelings and their inten-

tions, once they achieve the elevation of office they can only view society in the same way as a schoolmaster views his pupils, and between pupils and masters equality cannot exist. On one side there is the feeling of superiority that is inevitably provoked by a position of superiority; on the other side, there is the sense of inferiority which follows from the superiority of the teacher, whether he is exercising an executive or a legislative power. Who-ever talks of political power talks of domination...”

[3] From Emma Goldman’s *Anarchism: What It Really Stands For*:

“The history of human growth and development is at the same time the history of the terrible struggle of every new idea heralding the approach of a brighter dawn. In its tenacious hold on tradition, the Old has never hesitated to make use of the foulest and cruelest means to stay the advent of the New, in whatever form or period the latter may have asserted itself. Nor need we retrace our steps into the distant past to realize the enormity of opposition, difficulties, and hardships placed in the path of every progressive idea. The rack, the thumbscrew, and the knout are still with us; so are the convict’s garb and the social wrath, all conspiring against the spirit that is serenely marching on.”