

Perspectives on Anarchist Theory

The Same New World After September 11

By Cindy Milstein

Most of us will always remember where we were when we first heard the news, first saw the unreal images, on that morning that can only be called, quite inadequately, a tragedy. There is no erasing the memory of what happened, just as there is no bringing back the dead. September 11 will always be a day to be condemned. It will also mark a juncture in history. The list grows increasingly long by the hour: a lengthy war allegedly sanctioned by, in Bush's words, "the collective will of the world"; racist attacks on Muslims and Arabs; the gutting of civil liberties; patriotic flag waving and media-sponsored jingoism; new subsidies for the rich and further degradation for the poor; and much more.

Glimpsed from a certain angle, the newly altered global terrain after the September

11 suicide strikes is not so different after all. The hijacked planes speeding into the twin symbols of capitalism only helped accelerate political, social, and economic upheavals already swiftly underway. Towers may have tumbled, but the process made up of a constellation of phenomena bundled under the term "globalization" moves forward at a mind-bogglingly renewed pace, forging new forms of domination even as it affords openings. And given the tenacity of barbarism—from terrorism to militarism, from internationally networked fundamentalists to the international "community" of statist and capitalists—struggles to draw out the liberatory potentials within globalization appear even more imperative.

This means assessing not so much the changed world,

crucial as that is, but the not-so-changed one that confronts us after the "attack on America." And not simply to reclaim the offensive that had the G8, IMF/WB, and WTO on the run. (As long ago as it now seems, the most powerful governments on earth basically lost the legitimacy to meet in their own cities, much less publicly, after Genoa; the IMF/WB scaled back their fall meetings months before the planned direct actions even came near the streets; and the WTO scurried for cover this past November in a country without much pretense of democracy.) We must size up the same new world in order to regain our voices as anti-authoritarians, as a counterpoint to the cacophony of the doublespeak of nation-states, worn-out rhetoric of most leftists, and patriotism of the populace and media.

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Imperialism and Anti-authoritarian resistance after 9-11: Some Crucial Questions by Mark Lance

A great deal of activist attention is now focussed on the Middle East and Central Asia. This is a good thing, but not primarily because the US is fighting a war in Afghanistan. On the contrary, while there were many civilian deaths as a direct result of that war, and likely worse humanitarian consequences to follow, there are far more important geopolitical trends at work, and far more dangerous developments taking place, developments which are obscured by an excessive focus on the war. Indeed, the

primary function of the "War on Terror" – whether against Afghanistan, against the "axis of evil" (to use the caricature-proof language of our president), or against as yet undisclosed enemies – is precisely to obscure these other political developments.

It was, I think, clear from the beginning, that the US "War on Terror" marked a rapid acceleration of a process which is functioning to create a new imperial regime in Central Asia, one built on a model currently in place across the Middle East. Its

outlines are as follows. One, the US will support brutal authoritarian governments in small states throughout the region. Two, these states will be kept dependent on the US through a process of militarizing their relations to their people. (That is, none of these governments will have broad popular support, most will face active insurgencies, and all will thereby depend for their survival on US military support. Of course the usual global capitalist mechanisms of control will also be

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IAS Update

- **Welcome** to the Spring, 2002 IAS newsletter.. Much has happened at the IAS over the past year. We completed a successful 2001 fundraising campaign in which we were able to provide \$8000 in grants (see grant awards and updates for details). The IAS also has a new general director along with a new home.

As of February 15, Rebecca Dewitt has stepped down from the position of General Director and is now an IAS board member. She has done an excellent job over the past couple of years guiding the IAS, and all of us on the board thank her for her dedication and hard work. I was appointed as general director by the board and am extremely enthusiastic about my new role with the IAS having already served as a board member for a number of years. Professionally a bookseller in Amherst, Massachusetts, I have also been involved in the anarchist movement since the early 1980s and, along with IAS board member Cindy Milstein, coorganize the annual *Renewing the Anarchist Tradition* conference.

With my appointment as general director, the IAS office has relocated to 98 Main street, Conway, Massachusetts. Housed in a former Masonic temple, the IAS will now have access to more additional space for other projects.

It is my hope that the IAS can become more engaged in activities beyond grant giving and our newsletter over the coming years. Besides offering support to radical writers, which will always remain our primary focus, I would like to see the IAS help to organize conferences and seminars, put out additional publications, and set up speaking tours.

This issue of *Perspectives*, our bi-annual newsletter, seeks to create a forum to open dialogue among anti-authoritarian leftists on the difficult questions as well as concerns surrounding the events of September 11th. Anarchist writers, from different theoretical backgrounds, were asked to contribute an essay that deals with specific issues of importance to them. They were also asked to write in whatever style they felt comfortable with and from whatever vantage point (theoretical, practical, or personal) they wished. The opinions expressed in the following essays do not represent the views of

the IAS but they do illustrate the many ways in which anarchists explore such world events. Lacking an "official position," anarchists create vibrant intellectual debates, as I trust these essays as a whole reveal. It is, after all, such debates and the questions they raise that allow anarchism to remain a dynamic, relevant political movement.

The Board of directors and myself would like to thank all the donors for their continued generosity. Such generosity is truly inspiring, and it enables the IAS in particular and the anarchist community in general to have an ongoing voice in contemporary discussions.

We encourage contributors, donors, and all others to contact the IAS with suggestions and comments. As always, we look forward to hearing from you.

John Petrovato
March 2002

Grant Awards Spring 2002

The IAS Board of Directors was pleased to award grants to the following individuals for February, 2002:

\$2000 to Lorenzo Komboa

Erwin for a rewrite of *Anarchism and the Black Revolution*. The book, first published in 1989 as a pamphlet, has had a significant impact within the anarchist movement. The work argues that a "class and economic analysis for the reconstruction of society is not possible if racism as a social impediment is not fully considered, and the concerns of people of color are not included in a social revolutionary agenda". Beyond his important written contributions, Lorenzo has also been active in prisoner rights work, the Black Autonomy/"people of color" tendency within contemporary anarchism, anti-racism movements, and other social change projects.

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Grant Awards continued

\$1000 to Ali Sauer for her book-length piece titled: *Voicing Exclusion(s): A Critical Examination of Current Discourses on the "Anti-Corporate Globalization" Movement*. In what promises to be a fascinating study, Ali will investigate how social movements in general, and the "anti-globalization movement" in particular, reproduce certain structures of domination by the very way such movements are articulated and by the way they define themselves - - by a discourse of inclusivity. Her project, which will consist of interviews and research, will attempt to understand the limitations

of such discourses, and also suggest ways in which they may be redefined to become more relevant and powerful. One of the many contributions that will emerge from this work will be, as Ali puts it, to "encourage a radical redefinition of anti-globalization activism that recognizes, in a non-colonial manner, the range of people engaged in this work".

\$1000 to Sean Gauthier for his unique book *Many Manifestations: Blueprints for a Bricoleur's War Machine*. As opposed to most contemporary scholars, Sean questions whether the

process and development of globalization inherent in late capitalism is unavoidable (as it is often assumed). Informed by such thinkers as Foucault and Deleuze, Sean will critique globalization and the arguments which maintain it, and in turn, draw out effective strategies for resistance. In many ways, his project may be viewed as a "poststructuralist anarchist response to Hardt and Negri's *Empire*".

If you are interested in applying for a grant, please send a SASE to the IAS at P.O. Box 482, Amherst, MA. 01004; or print an application from our website

<http://flag.blackened.net/ias>.

Grant Updates

Kevin Doyle has finished his three-act theater play, *Orange Fire*, about the life, beliefs and struggles of Irish activist Captain Jack White (1879-1946), who strongly identified as an anarchist. He is currently working on finding a venue for his play. He was awarded \$1000 in June 2000.

Mike Staudenmaier has finished his project, *Towards a New Anarchist Theory of Nationalism*, which has taken the form of two essays: "Towards a New Anarchist Theory of Nationalism", published in issue #3 of *Arsenal: A Magazine of Anarchist Strategy and Culture* (Winter 2001) and "Nationalism: Definitions and Clarifications", to be published in the March 2002 issue of *Onward*. In addition, he is working on a new piece about the theories of Bakunin, Landauer, and Rocker, which he hopes to have done this summer. He was awarded \$1500 in January 2000.

Jessica Lawless has finished her article and documentary, "Racializing Anarchism Then and Now." Her documentary is available for viewing upon request. She was awarded \$1500 in January 2001.

Andrés Pérez and Felipe del Solar has completed an 81 page draft of the first chapter of their book *Chile: Anarchist Practices Under Pinochet*. This chapter

covers the 70's and political developments including anarcho-sindicalist activities, anarchist involvement in the student movement and counter-culture, and armed anarchist action. This information is especially interesting since it has never been studied before. The chapter also provides information on various anarchist organizational initiatives as well as the relationship between anarchists and other members of the left. They were awarded \$2000 in January 2001.

Carlos Fernandez and Jena Cephas are working on their two-part project *The Quilombo Project* (originally titled *Anarchists of Color*). They have received many responses to their initial survey and have set up a web site, which features their work in progress as well as other people's writings. Several interviews are in progress and they expect to have both parts of the project, (interviews and analysis) done by the end of this summer. Visit their website for more frequent updates, <http://www.quilomboproject.org>. More resources and links relating to their project can be found at <http://www.illegalvoices.org/apoc>. They were awarded \$2000 in July 2001.

Lucien van der Walt for "Anarchism and Revolutionary Syndicalism in South

Africa, 1904-1921", which expands upon a project previously funded by the IAS. Currently, he is working on the question of race, examining how the South African movement sought to weld the struggles of the multi-racial working class to the struggle for a post-segregation, stateless, and self managed South African society. Material from his project has been presented at numerous conferences, and articles have appeared in *Direct Action* (Australia) among others. He was awarded \$1000 in June 2000.

Fernando Gustavo López Trujillo has completed the introduction and six chapters of his project, *The FACA and the Anarchist Movement in Argentina, 1930-1950*, and is almost finished with an additional two chapters and three appendices. He was awarded \$2200 in June 1999.

Joe Lowndes is currently researching and writing on the crystallization of racial anti-statism on the right in and around the 1964 Goldwater campaign for his piece, *Anarchism and the Rise of Rightwing Anti-statism*. Since his project has evolved into a larger, book project, this summer will see the publication of a shorter, focused article on conservative anti-statism for the anarchist audience. He was awarded \$1000 in June 1998.

What's Happening: Books and Events By Chuck Morse

The Battle After Seattle: Politics

There is a growing body of literature documenting and analyzing the most militant, anti-authoritarian tendencies in the movement against global capital. This literature reflects the increasing political importance of today's revolutionary movement and provides invaluable resources for anarchists seeking to deepen and clarify its vision. *The Battle of Seattle: Debating Capitalist Globalization and the WTO* is one useful work (Soft Skull Press, 2002, 400 pages). This anthology, edited by Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose, places recent anti-capitalist protests in a broader historical context that includes things such as resistance to the IMF and neo-liberalism in Venezuela, Korea, and Chiapas, the mass organizing campaigns of the nuclear-freeze movement in the 1980s, and the innovative direct action tactics of environmentalists in the US. The book combines street-level reporting with inquiries into questions such as: how can a movement that claims to be global root itself in local communities? What happens to non-violent tactics in an environment of increasingly ruthless policing? Can NGOs be agents of social transformation or are they only a mirror of the dominant society within the movement? How can a predominantly white activist scene in the US and Europe form respectful ties with activists of color? Does trashing Starbucks damage capitalism itself? Another valuable contribution can be found in *Genoa and the Anti-Capitalist Movement* (various authors, One-Off Press, 2002, 143 pages). This book contains reports and analyses from the most militant elements of the anti-G8 demonstrations in Genoa in July 2001. It examines these protests to encourage the theoretical and political growth of the anti-globalization movement's most confrontational wing. Spanish readers should pick up *Globalización Capitalista: Luchas y resistencias* (Trans: *Capitalist Globalization: Struggles and Resistances*) by

F. Durán, M. Elcezarreta and M. Sáez (Editorial Virus, 2001, 240 pages). This book is a analysis of the acceleration of capitalist globalization, its social and economic costs, the present situation of the anti-globalization movement, and its possibilities for the future. Those who need a break from reading should check out a new film from the Cascadia Media Collective: *A Year in the Streets: WTO Seattle to the Bush Inauguration*. This film criss-crosses the U.S. to provide a street-level view of the clash between radical activists and the state. It covers the anti-WTO protests in Seattle, protests against the IMF/World Bank in Washington D.C., demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, and many others.

And Theory

Two forthcoming books attempt to explicate some of theoretical premises of a contemporary revolutionary perspective. John Holloway's *Change the World Without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today* takes its point of departure from the failure of state-centered revolutionary movements and the emergence of revolutionary movements that do not aim to take power (such as the Zapatistas, the anti-globalization movement, and others). He asks: how we can reformulate our understanding of revolution as the struggle against - not for - power? Holloway tries to answer this question with an inquiry that draws on "Western Marxist" thinkers such as Adorno, Bloch, and Lukacs and Marx's concept of "fetishization" (Pluto Press, March 2002, 240 pages). Another theoretical work with roots in the anti-globalization movement is *The Anti-Capitalism Reader* (Akashic Books, June 2002). This anthology, edited by Joel Schalit, contains writings on the theory, practice, and history of anti-capitalist politics from activists and scholars in the movement. Among the topics explored are the presence of anti-capitalist movements in everyday life,

the history of anti-capitalism, strategies of anti-capitalist resistance, regionalism and anti-capitalism, and anti-capitalism and intellectual property. It also includes a brief selection of some of the most historically important criticisms of the free market from theorists such as Marx, Gramsci, and other Marxist, anarchist, and Situationist thinkers.

Chomsky

No one has greater stature in today's radical movements than Noam Chomsky. *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky* (edited by Peter Mitchell and John Schoeffel) assembles many of Chomsky's recent talks on the past, present, and future of the politics of power (published here for the first time). Chomsky covers topics from foreign policy the during Vietnam War to the decline of welfare under the Clinton administration. And, as he explores the connection between America's imperialistic foreign policy and the decline of domestic social services, he tries to discern the necessary steps toward social transformation (New Press, 2002, 432 pages). Jeremy Fox's *Chomsky and Globalisation* provides a summary of Chomsky's recently published views on globalization and the "New World Order" (Totem Books, 2001, 80 pages).

The Return of the Repressed

Although we will never recreate the anarchist movement of yesteryear, we must certainly learn its lessons to build a new one. Fortunately, many of these lessons are being documented with greater and greater thoroughness. David Berry's *The History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917-1945* is the first full-length English-language history of France's interwar anarchist movement (Greenwood Publishing, April 2002, 296 pages). This book analyzes the anarchists' responses to the Russian and Spanish revolutions and the creation of the international communist movement. It details the dilemmas facing anarchism at a crucial mo-

ment in the movement's history, characterized by serious questioning of "traditional" anarchist theory and practice. During this key era, leading militants within the movement sought to clarify anarchist theory regarding the nature of 20th-century revolutions, to challenge the rejection of organization, and to integrate anarchism more fully into the broader socialist and trade union movements. The anarchists were capable of organizing large and efficient campaigns and their analyses of developments on the left and in the trade union movement were often more prescient than those of the socialists and communists. Barry takes seriously the anarchists' attempts to come to terms with the challenges of revolution and to respond positively to them in a distinctly libertarian socialist way. Ultimately, they were only partially successful in such efforts, and this accounts in large part for the failure of the movement.

The sexual radicalism of the older anarchist movement has often been noted but rarely explored in its complexity. This will be corrected to some extent by Xavier Diez's Catalan-language *Utopia Sexual a la Premsa Anarquista de Catalunya* (trans. *Sexual Utopia in the Catalan Anarchist Press*, Pagès editors, 2001, 191 pages). This book focuses on the periodical *Ètica-Inicial* (1927-1937) to explore the anarchist attempt to construct a new morality that held sexual liberty as its premise.

Anti-fascist participation in anti-fascist resistance has been poorly documented, although fortunately some of this rich history is now being told. German readers should check out *Anarchisten gegen Hitler: Anarchisten, Anarcho-Syndikalisten, Rätekommunisten in Widerstand und Exil* (trans. *Anarchists Against Hitler: Anarchists, Anarcho-syndicalists, and Council Communists in the Resistance and in Exile*). This anthology, edited by Andreas Graf, seeks to rectify the omission of anarchists from historical accounts of workers' resistance groups and activities during the Nazi period. It focuses on anti-Nazi resistance in Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, and

avoids either glorifying or omitting anarchists by studying the roles anarchists actually played in the resistance (Lukas Verlag für kunst-und Geistesgeschichte, 2001, 317 pages). Spanish readers should pick up *Cuenta Atrás. La Historia de Salvador Puig Antich* by Francesc Escibano (trans. *The Store Behind: The History of Salvador Puig Antich*). This book tells the story of a young Catalan anarchist militant executed by the Spanish state for fighting Franco's fascist regime (Península, 2001, 204 pages).

Just Yesterday

The recent history of the anarchist movement is only beginning to be documented. Ann Hansen's *Direct Action: Memoirs of an Urban Guerrilla* (AK Press, 2002, 490 pages) narrates the story of a dramatic moment in the movement in the early 1980's. Hansen was a member of Direct Action, a Canadian anarchist urban guerrilla group, that was responsible for a campaign of dramatic actions culminating in the bombing of the Litton Systems Hydroelectric plant in Toronto and three pornographic video stores. Hansen served seven years in prison and now tells her story for the first time. The book contains a probing analysis of the political context during those years that will doubtlessly resonate with those lived through the events as well as those who did not. Also of interest is a new 140-minute double CD from AK Press: *Mob Action Against the State: Collected Speeches from the Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair* (July 2002). The CD includes speeches from Barry Pateman (Kate Sharpley Library/Emma Goldman Papers Project), Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Jello Biafra, Christian Parenti, Ruthie Gilmore, and others.

More Books

The New Formulation: An Anti-Authoritarian Review of Books is a new biannual journal featuring comparative book reviews from an anarchist perspective. Its goal is to "help clarify the distinctness of an anarchist approach to social affairs, to provide a forum for the integration of new works and insights into the anarchist project, and to give authors struggling to redefine the

tradition a setting in which to share their research and reflections". The first 46-page issue contains reviews of works on the prison industrial complex, prison life generally, the anti-globalization movement, and the Black Panther Party. It also contains a statement against the war. Annual subscriptions to the journal, which is edited by the author of the article you are presently reading, are \$7 in the U.S. and \$10 elsewhere (payable to Charles Morse). Write to *The New Formulation*, 2620 Second Avenue, #4B, San Diego, CA, 92103 - U.S.A.. The full text of the first issue can be found online at: <http://flag.blackened.net/nf/index.htm>

La Ciudad de México

The Institute for Social Ecology is sponsoring a special Mexico City Study Tour from May 19th to May 27th. This program will use classroom lectures and participatory tours throughout the city to explore the evolution of Mexico City's social structures and the opposition movements that have challenged them. Special emphasis will be placed on the contributions and dilemmas of anti-authoritarian activists in the city's history. More information is available here: <http://www.social-ecology.org/programs/winter/mexico.html> and from the ISE at 1118 Maple Hill Road, Plainfield, VT, 05667, USA. Tel/Fax.: 1 (802) 454-8493

Mexico City's Biblioteca Social Reconstruir is suffering a grave financial crisis and needs the support of sympathizers around the world to continue their work. Please send a donation to: Biblioteca Social Reconstruir, A.P. 9090, C.P. 06002, Mexico 1 D.F. (make checks payable to Martha Cecilia Garcia Juarez). More information about the library can be found here: <http://www.libertad.org.mx/>

The Same New World After September 11

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Only by understanding the complexities of the world, both the heightened sameness as well as disconcerting newness, can anarchists again serve as voices of conscience. What follows are some thoughts, far from answers and further still from solutions, along two intertwined yet divergent paths.

The Path of Least Resistance

Wall Street shut down, for the longest period in its history. On any other day, in the context of a widespread social movement, this would have been cause for celebration. But it was impossible to feel joy given the circumstances. This is the paradox at the heart of the film *Fight Club*. The alienation that we in the glittering consumer society of the West feel—at least those of us fortunate enough to have material plenty—can go in either libertarian or fascistic directions. Either may bring transnationals to their knees, but the means are quite different and the ends even starker. As *Fight Club* implies, a world opposed to or ultimately even outside of capitalism could look equally ugly, equally violent.

No one can really say why the suicidal hijackers of September 11 targeted the World Trade Center and Pentagon, but it's safe to venture that it had something to do, at least in part, with the unease caused by a world in transition. (That in no way justifies the means used, nor in all likelihood, the equally brutal and authoritarian ends.) Yet ironically, rather than slowing or halting the dizzying transformation known as globalization, the one-two punch aimed at the great symbols of capitalism and militarism has only increased its velocity, and from an antiauthoritarian perspective, sent it in the wrong direction.

The tectonic shift known as globalization, still so difficult to define, is in large part about a shift in power relations. It is a shift that is far from settled. As globalization breaks down all sorts of barriers—social as well as spatial, real as well as virtual—it carves out a world just as open to the free flow of resistance as of capitalism. Capitalism's internal compulsion to continually expand is greatly helping to re-map the world as one without borders,

but so too are the growing bonds of solidarity between the earth's displaced, dispossessed peoples. The powerful and powerless are both influential in this globalizing process; both are also very much at its mercy. Because as old divides crumble, up for grabs is where and with whom power will ultimately reside once the world is fully globalized—"power" here referring to what and who will ultimately decide the shape of that fully globalized world. Thus is globalization creating a power vacuum.

Authoritarians and antiauthoritarians alike have stepped into this vacuum in a struggle for very different notions of how decision making should be structured. Those presently in command obviously have a greater advantage. But because the power struggle takes place within, not outside, the globalization process itself, everyone is forced to play by the new rules being created by a globalizing world. These rules mandate such strategies as mobility, flexibility, openness, networking, and cooperation. Our old mind-sets, however, haven't caught up to these new rules, and hence it is difficult to see that even the powerful are destabilized. This is the unease of globalization even for a superpower as preeminent as the United States, the nation-system central to creating a globalized world yet vulnerable to being unraveled by the very process of getting there. Two examples from the new "war on terrorism" will hopefully suffice here: the open borders-closed borders dilemma, and the need for international cooperation before launching strikes against, for now, Afghanistan.

Long before the eleventh of September, as far back as the mid-1940s and certainly since the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall, the nation-state as a tightly bounded entity has been in decline. International bodies from the European Union to the Hague Tribunal are helping to capture more and more of the "traditional" functions of individual states at the supranational level. Certain states benefit and others lose out in the short run, but all states must increasingly forfeit elements of their autonomy in this new world community. A related,

though different breaking down of the national boundedness of capitalism has taken place, and supranational corporations and financial institutions are now the norm. This upward consolidation of governance and economics, to name just two key spheres, has made borders between countries and even continents increasingly irrelevant.

Yet unlike capitalism, which happily assists in tearing down walls in order to grow, borders are necessary for states if they are to remain a distinct set of institutions with powers all their own. In short, if they are to remain a distinct state. As quickly as the globalization process irrevocably chips away at borders, then, states must just as quickly engage in keeping up appearances that they do, indeed, control their own territory. For this patina of control is what makes the difference being legitimacy and illegitimacy for states. When individual countries are forced by a globalizing world to ease border restrictions, they must maintain this illusion of control by promoting and/or signing agreements that ratify what is, to a certain extent, already the on-the-ground reality.

And so seeming paradoxes abound. The U.S. government promulgates an agreement to fling open borders throughout the Americas to trade, and is even willing to consider a quasi-citizen category for Mexican "guest" workers in the United States, but (vainly) tries to stave off border crossings for illegal drugs or immigrants, or for those anarchists who wanted to join the Anti-Capitalist Convergence in Quebec last April. This paradox has only been accentuated since September 11. For instance, it is now much more difficult for U.S. citizens to get back into the States after visiting Canada, but Bush is trying to do an end run around activists by getting Congress to agree to fast-track the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas—to patriotically show those terrorists they can't stop business as usual (which, of course, they haven't). As globalization congeals into a globalized world, however, this contradiction will likely be resolved as borders blur and perhaps even dissolve. Unfortunately, such a "no borders"

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campaign is a frightening prospect when waged by nation-states—the victor potentially being competing networks of supraplates or even a one-world government monopoly.

But that is the possible totalizing world of tomorrow. For now, another example of the post-September 11 acceleration in this blurring of borders relates to policing. The terror perpetrated on U.S. soil brought the world home. It is, of course, a positive development that Americans now realize they are part of humanity. Yet Bush and company would have us believe that means there is now "no place to hide," neither for terrorists nor us many, lowly civilians. Or more precisely, everywhere is now a potential hiding place, everyone a possible suspect, for September 11 showed that fear and terror know no borders. They don't tell us that states, too, also have no safe refuge. They would rather have us think that if the earth is indeed everyone's home, we must defend it against intruders, and that means calling the police. Anticapitalist activists know full well that "domestic" police like the FBI had already gone global to lend a hand against protesters in Prague; and Dutch and German police in one small region recently built a station that straddles both their countries' borders. What might have been a gradual process, though, has now been telescoped since the suicide attacks. "Homeland security" involves European NATO planes policing U.S. skies; police "wiretaps" will follow individuals across borders rather than staying put on a phone. Enter the age of the supra-police state.

The processes of globalization still place limits even on these new forms of domination, at least for the moment. Cooperation is one of the restraints, for cohabitation on a globalized planet necessitates that we—the "we" running the gamut from police to states to fundamentalists to leftists—get along out of mere survival. Such global "cooperation" could already be seen in relation to flows of capital; national currencies giving way in Europe to a regional one, the Euro, are just one instance. But the war on terrorism ushers in a heightened sense of cooperation, in this case between nations. The U.S. government can no longer get away with

being the world's police. As one part of what's becoming a police world, it too must now seek out and actually get moral and material cooperation from a plurality of states, nominally democratic or not. "An attack on one is an attack on all," affirms NATO in a grand subversion of the Wobbly slogan. "Not in our name," chant peace activists in the United States, but "our name" is much larger and more dangerous than simply "America." This global war will involve a consensus much harder to combat in that it stretches across cooperating states, not between competing ones, in a battle against "rogue nations" and stateless "evil."

This is a small, still shadowy part of the world emerging after September 11. It is a changed world, perhaps, but only because the changes already underway were so fast-forwarded as to appear as something completely new. The same new world's novelty, however, lies in its ability to throw everyone and everything off balance. Old assumptions have been shattered, but they were shattered long before September 11, and unless we carefully shift through the rubble, we will find neither cause nor effect.

The Path of Renewed Resistance

The Statue of Liberty shut down, for the longest period in its history (other than for renovations or repairs). If we are supposedly returning to "normal," if the U.S. government is allegedly defending the liberties that make this country exemplary, why protect Liberty Enlightening the World, as she's officially called, from the public? It's only one statue, and a contentious one at that, but what better symbol of the irony of the war on terrorism to guarantee "enduring freedom" than its continued closure?

For this statue was intended to stand for "universal political freedom"; it was meant to welcome all peoples of the world into a purportedly democratic society. The fact that unlike the stock exchange, this icon has still not been able to be reopened makes plain the U.S. government's values. And certainly, there are many in the United States who share the government's increasingly nativist, undemocratic sentiments.

But there are many others who don't.

Witness those moments on 9-11-2001—and there were many—when people didn't fulfill notions of humanity as greedy, xenophobic, or power hungry. When voluntarism along with numerous acts of kindness were as overwhelming, if not more so, a response. When the senseless deaths of that morning made many turn both inward to reflect on the meaning of their own lives, on how they contribute to society, and also outward to explore other cultures, religions, histories. And when many people recognized just how fragile concepts like "freedom" and "democracy" are, even if those notions are hollowed out or often false in these United States.

It will be, and indeed it has been, difficult for people to get back to normal, especially when "normal" is defined as shopping and returning to work. The genuine emptiness of life-before-September-11 has hit hard for many, particularly in contrast to the genuine community most felt in the days just after the attacks. Millions have (re)turned to religion, others to friends and family; some to a peace movement. They have sought company and values in a world that now seems lonely and valueless, and many long for an ethical orientation that is about a greater good than chasing the American dream.

All that meets the ear, however, is a deafening silence. People are at a loss for words as well as ideas to explain September 11 and beyond. The silence is so deep that it will be harder than ever to break, especially since we too have been quieted. Cries of "U.S. imperialism" or "imagine peace" have just as abrasive a ring as "God Bless America" in the stillness that now engulfs both unity and dissent. It is a silence that must end, but only when we are ready to serve as insightful, articulate voices not afraid to speak truth to the powerful, not fearful of playing with unending contradictions that may defy simple responses, not in a hurry to work through the complexities that are today's scared new world.

For there is a world stuck between the bin Ladens and George Bushes of today desirous of something better. But there must be something better to consider.

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Same New World Continued from page 7

That means making sense—from a libertarian Left perspective—of fundamentalism, the war of terror and war on terrorism, supranational alliances, and a host of other phenomena connected to and sometimes separate from the process of globalization. It also means taking account of these new global dynamics in our praxis. Such a renaissance of thought within anarchist circles will allow us to re-create the space we struggled so hard to build prior to September 11, for we will have something profound to say and hopeful to offer. Only from this place of critical thought can we again press ahead, even if by baby steps, as educators and agitators.

Since September 11, antiauthoritarians have defied media stereotypes by exhibiting patience, grace, and great sensitivity. Canceling the long-planned direct actions against the IMF/WB in Washington, D.C. during a period of collective mourning is just one of the many recent acts that offer a hint of our ethical orientation and prefigurative politics. It is "diversity of tactics" coming to maturity. Now we must broaden this notion in the days ahead, reaching out to those newly politicized and newly touched by world events in ways we might not have imagined or embraced on September 10.

We know that any move toward peace must understand that peace did not reign prior to September 11, that peace can never be approximated without a struggle to continually root out domination while providing alternatives. We know that a peace movement can't operate as if the world were pre-globalization. The best sort of antiwar movement would be one that sees itself as an extension, indeed an expansion of the anticapitalist, antistatist struggle that preceded it. The best sort of movement for peace would be one calling for a free society of free individuals.

Our project is, and must be, the same today as it was before the horrific acts of violence on September 11 and retaliatory ones since October 7. Cooperation between heads of state in a war against terrorism must be contrasted to mutual aid between peoples in a struggle against authoritarian rule, be it by states or self-

appointed martyrs. The evisceration of civil liberties calls more than ever for a libertarian alternative. A widening circle of ethnically motivated attacks begs yet again for a substantive notion of humanity and diversity—from the East Coast to the Middle East. The immiserization of people demands even more that production and distribution be structured around desire not domination. And perhaps most compellingly, the greater consolidation of hierarchical networks of suprapowers in the post-September 11 world must be thwarted by a directly democratic, confederal politics at the global grass roots. Far from over, our project is now more crucial than ever, and potentially bears more resonance in and outside any peace movement.

Nevertheless, we now find ourselves in the rather awkward position of having good ideas under increasingly bad circumstances. In this globalizing world, we too have no place to hide, we too are increasingly vulnerable. Thus we must continue to solidify our own infrastructure, including but not limited to independent media, physical spaces, a material base, and political organizations. We must distance ourselves from positions within our milieu that either glamorize acts of terror, like setting police on fire, or condone it, like supporting the Unabomber's deeds. We must reach out beyond our counterculture, both globally and continentally, yet also by working where we live. It is a good thing that the world is opening up, that borders are blurring and power is shifting, but only if we begin to create living examples of how to organize power in ways that globalize freedom.

Capitalism was not brought down by September 11; it forges on in a macabre though hypocritical tribute to the victims of that morning. Authoritarians from al Qaeda to G. W. Bush retain their power to command, to stir up wars in the name of God, albeit different ones. The WTO went ahead with its fall meeting, shamelessly dangling the newly poor in the wake of September 11 as the reason, without mentioning its own deeper complicity in this impoverishment. The world looks bleak, the good society seems distant. But small openings still appear. It is up to us to raise alternative beacons of light in the coming storm. ~

Imperialism and Anti-authoritarian by Mark Lance

Continued from page 1

extended wherever possible.) Meanwhile the US will establish permanent military installations throughout the region. Eventually natural gas, and oil deposits in Central Asia will be exploited with the help of these regimes, as oil is now in the Middle East.

With significant but for our purposes unimportant variations, this is the situation currently with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the small gulf states, Egypt, Pakistan, and others. Current US actions are leading in the same direction for Uzbekistan (where a new permanent US base at Khanabad houses 1,500 personnel), Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan (where the US is currently building a transportation hub capable of handling thousands of troops) and Afghanistan. In terms of new aid, Simon Tisdall reports in the Guardian that under new economic aid packages "Uzbekistan received \$64m in US assistance and \$136m in US Export-Import Bank credits in 2001. In 2002, the Bush administration plans to hand over \$52m in assistance to Kazakhstan, some partly for military equipment."

Israel is slightly different as it is not merely militarized, but a country with a nuclear capable, highly effective modern military, and with a popular government. And of course levels of US aid to Israel dwarf those to other countries. Further, it has traditionally been useful for different reasons. But Israel remains partially dependent on the US, given its complete isolation in the region, and largely subservient to US interests. States like Iraq, which do not function well in the US imperial scheme are effectively destroyed, though still held out as threats to justify further imperial actions. (This function – serving as a constant "threat" that can be tossed out to the press and public whenever an imperial project is in need of justification – is being taken over by the "war on terrorism," leaving one to wonder whether the complete destruction of Iraq isn't now on the agenda.)

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There is nothing subtle about any of this, and it is not hard to see the pattern. The US now has military bases across the globe, in well over 100 countries, in virtually every major region of every continent. It has recently built bases in 13 locations in nine countries in Central Asia, bases that Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz recently said would involve a long-term commitment. In addition, the US now exercises substantial control over the economies of the majority of states in the world and effective veto power over political decisions taken by small countries throughout the world. This is an empire, the largest and most powerful in human history. And the forefront of expansion is the Middle East and Central Asia.

Neither the empire nor the strategy of managing that empire through militarized insecure states is new, but the level of commitment to the strategy, the rate of expansion, and the sheer recklessness of its implementation have all risen enormously since 9-11. The danger inherent in this strategy is significant for the people of the world. Most of the countries in the Middle East and Central Asia are so weak that their collapse is a real possibility. The crisis is particularly frightening in countries like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Nor would the likely successor regimes be palatable. In most cases the principle insurgency is a repressive religiously focussed movement and no anti-authoritarian can hope for such a change. As significant would be the immediate human cost of widespread civil war in the region. At least Israel, Pakistan, and India are nuclear powers. Other countries have nuclear reactors, and many have stockpiles of advanced weapons. So the potential human cost of a regional meltdown are staggering.

I don't think there can be any question of whether anti-authoritarians need to confront the advancement of an imperial project that threatens millions of lives (not to mention one that is providing cover for a massive increase in police and state power in the US and Europe). I don't think there can be any question that this must be at the center of our work. The question, of course, is how to confront it. What would an

anti-authoritarian movement against US imperialism in the Middle East and Central Asia look like? How would such a movement differ if it were to be built with an eye toward our eventual goal of an anti-authoritarian world, marked by mutual aid and solidarity?

These are hard questions. My goal in what follows is to impart a sense of urgency upon questions that arise for anti-authoritarian activists in light of these features of the current political situation. While I have a few modest suggestions regarding answers, I have no settled views. Those we need to seek together.

Certainly anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarians should continue to work for the global justice movement, continue pushing for an anti-authoritarian agenda and anti-authoritarian structures within it, and try to do a much better job than they have in the past of integrating an opposition to militarism, war, and military support of repressive states into that movement. The hard part, it seems to me, is the internationalism.

We absolutely must reach out to the people of the region. Not only is it arrogant and contrary to principles of mutual aid to think that we can just organize among ourselves on behalf of people half a planet away, but it is also clearly a losing strategy. Another effect of the whole process of power extension since 9-11 is a massive polarization in the populations of the Middle East and Central Asia. In Pakistan, for example, secular resistance to the current military regime has all but disappeared, while repressive Islamic opposition is increasing. The reason is quite simple: any opposition to Islamic groups is effectively portrayed as pro-US, a portrayal that radically discredits the group in question. Thus, any group with a progressive or liberal agenda of any sort is finding itself less and less able to play a role in the political development of the region while power splits into a horrifying binary opposition of authoritarian clients of US imperialism, and fundamentalism. Clearly this is a process we must try to confront by way of international solidarity. We cannot simply organize at

the center of empire while a whole region of the Earth spirals into disaster that could have profound effects on us all. If the ideals of anarchism mean anything, they require of us solidarity and mutual aid with people in the midst of such a situation. But how, and with whom?

These, as I see it, are the hard questions we must now face. More specifically:

- How do we find groups, organizations, movements, and individuals interested in working in solidarity with an anti-authoritarian, anti-imperialist movement? (In the extreme case, what if there are none? What if, say, the Palestinians simply opt for Jihad against Israel, and turn their backs on secular solidarity?)
- How do we navigate the deep problems that will arise from the profound political differences between our own groups and any movements we ally ourselves with?
- How do we work collaboratively with these movements, without trying to dictate our own theories and techniques into contexts in which they are unfamiliar?
- How do we navigate the very different security and safety issues in these countries? How can we make political work safer for comrades in such regions of the world.
- How do we make ourselves more open a range of issues that we prefer not to engage with?

I'll close with some brief remarks on the ways these questions arise in two contexts: Lebanon and Palestine. (I use these examples because they are the two cases in the region with which I'm most familiar.)

In Palestine, there are many obstacles to international solidarity. One is obviously Israel and the devastating destruction of Palestinian society that it has wrought. The Occupied Territories are divided by an occupying military into an array of bantustans; the Palestinian economy is near collapse; human rights

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Fireflies in the Night By Kevin Van Meter

This is a brief, but strategic look at our present crisis, the potentialities that are unfolding within it, and the terrains of struggle that are opening before us. This is an attempt to go beyond the ideological limitations of anarchism in its present form. Here the poet, the romantic, and the revolutionary make up our new trinity.

1. The Poet. *"Against this monster, people all over the world, and particularly ordinary working people in factories, mines, fields, and offices, are rebelling every day in ways of their own invention."* - CLR James, Grace C. Lee & Pierre Chaulieu. In the present crisis we find the anti-authoritarian left lost in the night, donning ideological blinders, preventing it from seeing the fireflies dancing right before their faces. It has lost the simple power of observation, it no longer sees the paths out of the woods, or the strategic approaches that are build on the immanent actions of the oppressed.

1.2 A revolutionary approach to the present crisis. With the above said, I would, for strategic reasons only, like to approach the different facets of the crisis we are now faced with. To begin, this crisis is the first of its kind, in the post-globalized world, to be taking place within the system. There are no barbarians at the gates; these "enemies of the western world" are inside the castle walls. Empire is everywhere. It is found at the genesis of this crisis; its form is reflected in this crisis and *"it is called into being and constituted on the basis of its capacity to resolve conflicts"*, hence it justifies itself in this crisis; we are witnessing a new stage of the development of capitalism.

Power itself has become raw, direct, and immanent, but it is the massive production of information and images in the wake of September 11th that shields this fact from the populace. This crisis is also a test of immaterial production, for if it fails, the ghost of power will be nose to our nose. But what about nationalism or the hyper-patriotism that we are now witnessing? Once again we see the corporation dressed in red, white and blue, but this time it is the media

multi-nationals, and not just Lockheed Martin, who is hiding behind the robes. Finally we must remember this crisis, as with globalization, is an attempt and not an absolute. The guardians are constructing a new order even after the cracks have appeared.

1.3 War against terrorism, dissent

The war against terrorism is an attack on our present cycle of struggle; against all those who resist, be they the ruling class of Islamic Fundamentalists or those of us un-Americans who dare to question the interests at play here. The process of globalization has created a diverse set of antagonists, not all with the same liberatory purpose. The guardians have attacked our newly constructed commons in an attempt to marginalize and restrict our movements. We see an apparent crisis of the state-form, uneasy in its footing, and straining its power networks; its over-response is a compensation for this. It has realized that it can not contain the multitude.

The Haitian Revolution in its time was a powerful example of the abilities of the slave population not only to resist, but also to construct their own society. Its mere existence was a threat to the system of slavery that existed in the United States, South America, and the rest of the Caribbean. Subcomandante Marcos (among others) is our own Toussaint L'Ouverture. While the guardians have closed our commons, they have not, and cannot wipe out our grog shops, networks, relationships, everyday resistances, temporary autonomous zones, and the multiplicity of examples that are anticipating a better world. It is these spaces that we need to facilitate, expand, and organize from. But we must know how to find them first.

2. The Romantic. *"One of the gravest obstacles to the achievement of liberation is that oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings' consciousness. Functionally, oppression is domesticating. To no longer be prey to its force, one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can be done only by means of praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it."*—Paulo Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

CLR James, Mutual Aid, and the Crisis of Anarchism: *"... there was a parallel between Kropotkin's insistence on the way the tendency of mutual aid asserted itself and Marx's insistence that workers expand their own self-organization in response to capital's exploitation."* When theory blinds us to the simply observable social phenomena and this theory no longer applies to the reality that we are confronted with, this theoretical form must be challenged, furthered, and expanded. Additionally theoretical developments always followed social reality or cycles of struggle. The ideological blinders of my anarchist colleagues have prevented them from approaching this situation theoretically and they have missed the proverbial boat on the revolutionary potentials of this crisis. Anarchism, in its present form, needs to be pushed to its theoretical limits and beyond.

Viewing this crisis in this form, where our once illuminated spaces have turned pitch black has prevented anarchists from seeing the numerous potentials, opportunities and terrains of struggle that exist. In defining our views on these ideologically anarchist grounds, and seeing every situation in terms of an 'anarchist movement', and hence defining our space in a limited fashion, we have self-marginalized the anarchist and anti-authoritarian viewpoint. Here my argument against the limits of anarchism in its present form takes on two distinct aspects. The first involves a substantive critique of the form itself and the second is a critique of the application of the present form. Anarchism, especially American anarchism, has not been part of the larger philosophical developments of the past 40 years since the world-wide movements of 1968. For example it has reinforced the cult of the worker instead of revolting against work itself. As a post-Enlightenment theoretical development whose major theorists were militant social actors rather than arm chair philosophers, anarchism has remained a simple set of principles and has not thoroughly developed its concepts. While its major strength has been these militant social actors, this form has not been conducive to answering the challenges of a changing world

and the philosophical developments that are reacting to these changes. Also, by not reacting to these changes, these principles have solidified into a limited ideology. For anarchism to be a viable and fruitful methodology it must shed its present ideological form and in doing so, develop its concepts and a synthesis with other theoretical developments.

Anarchism has become an ideological totality, defined against other ideological totalities. This is a totality, not as in totalitarian, but in one system as defined against other 'one' system(s), as a whole defined against other wholes. Anarchism has become an absolutist dogma based upon objective 'truth claims', justified outside of the experience of everyday social actors. This is what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'tree thinking'. Trees are singular, where every development or deviation is unified in a single norm. The anarchist tree is defined against other trees of the state, capital, police, war, etc. This anarchist tree must relate everything, every development to itself. To sum up these related critiques, anarchism in this form has solidified to a simple oppositional ideology incapable of reacting within reality and our present crisis.

Anarchism is justified as the point of departure rather than the endpoint of the thinking process or dialog. To state "I am an anarchist! So XYZ..." reflects the process of solidifying anarchism as a totalizing ideology. To counter this it requires that we see anarchism as a conclusion in our thought process and the end of an argument. In this way our thought process is immanent, of us, rather than transcendent, or of a system, god or natural development that is justified and concluded before this thought process even begins. This is reflected in the definitions and contexts we set in our approach to 'creating anarchists', specifically anarchist movements and organizations. We are spreading the anarchist message as defined against other messages, convincing others that anarchism holds the golden kernel of truth. This belief of objective truth, that stands at the core of anarchism, liberalism, and the Enlightenment from which it originates, has continued the dynamic of the us vs. them, right vs. wrong.

It is this very anarchism to which the space to organize has been closed. This form that the limited analysis of our present crisis has stemmed. It is this anarchism that has lost its ability to observe existing social phenomena that are taking place far from the tree and can not be defined or related to it. Ideological anarchism has ignored its own methodological developments, even those that are similar to the philosophical developments of the last 40 years.

So what is this social phenomena that I am speaking of? It is a diverse set of everyday resistances, self-organized activities, networks, relationships, and terrains of struggle. Some phenomena are related, while others are not. Some are connected underground, often with no knowledge of the other similar activities. We can listen to conversations, dialogues, and discussions that run counter to the context set for this crisis, most of which are separate from any organized 'movement' or the leftist critique. We see relationships being forged and new ways of being coming into existence. We see the desire for community and a life beyond work. We see human solidarity and expressions of grief that are not defined by nationalism or patriotism. In addition, new potentialities are being created by this crisis. New alliances and relationships can be formed. New spaces are being carved out that can be used as staging grounds for resistance. New issues and campaigns organized. And new possibilities for a free society. But these activities and spaces, our fireflies in the night, cannot be defined by and tied to an ideology; even one as liberatory as anarchism.

Our only task now is to create a new anarchist methodology; many, many anarchism(s), a multiplicity of anarchism(s); influenced by the theoretical developments post-1968 and by the immanent activities of social actors today. In this CLR James, among others, offers us a smorgasbord of possibilities, all contained within the general foci of immanence. Here we see the bridge between Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* and James' work. James looked at the revolutionary activity of the slaves of Haiti and its effect on world politics (especially here in the United States where the black population was still enslaved), the struggles of African people and women in his

own day, and the workers' councils of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. James believed that all of these illuminated the self-activity of oppressed peoples, and their ability to organize their own activities. Once the *"(Hungarian) people erupted spontaneously, the rest followed with an organic necessity and a completeness of self-organization that distinguishes this revolution for all previous revolutions"* It is the workers councils that developed out of these spontaneous activities; workers councils against the union, the party, the state, work and the social factory.

To conclude this section, our task as anarchists is to understand these broader theoretical developments, the power of observation, of self activity, and the rejection of anarchism in its present form: that of ideology. Anarchism, if it is going to be a vibrant form of struggle, needs to move away from justifying itself outside of the self-activity and mutual aid of ordinary people. In this return to its methodological form, its immanent form, a place of which those in the autonomist Marxist school have been chewing over for the past 50 years, I am proposing a new synthesis. A form of anarchism made up of a series of interconnected concepts. Multiplicity is nothing, with out non-heirarchical organizing, anti-statism, mutual aid, and direct democracy.

The Plane of Immanence and Revolutionary Strategy Today: Immanence, the space where struggles are taking place on the most basic level and where organized resistances develop out of these struggles, already exists. We see this brightly in the example of the Reclaim the Streets movement. This movement is obviously a development out of, and is affected by, previous struggles, it has blurred ideological lines in favor of methodological and hence immanent ones. The need for such tactics in the anti-road struggles (where it rises from in England), the creativity and mode of struggle that emanates from this is not immediately translated to the climate here in the United States or, more specifically, New York City, where I was first introduced to them, or even in suburban Long Island where the organization that I work with first used them. Each of these actions, each loca-

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Fire Flies**Continued from page 11**

tion, is different, is immanent, is particular. It is the general form that is translatable. Also within this cycle of struggle we see the hope and strength that anti-authoritarian movements have taken from the Zapatistas, a struggle which also cannot be copied and developed in another locale.

Food Not Bombs, Radical Cheerleaders, Critical Mass, Pirate Radio, our Temporary Autonomous Zones, Free Skools and the thousands of activist collectives and projects that make up this new movement don't have rigid ideological litmus tests, exclusive membership, or other forms of activism that would be defined as something separate, something outside of society acting upon it to change it. 'Do-it-yourself' ethics is a call to an anarchism that is 'in the here and now'. Here 'activism' is no longer limited to the activist. No longer limited to the forms of social change that seek to transcend the existing social order or to those which are justified outside of the experience of the oppressed multitude.

To return to our original purpose of dealing with our present (post-Sept. 11th) crisis, the anti-authoritarian movement has fallen back on its old ideological foundation for answers and approaches to this crisis. No one can fault them for this, but unfortunately these ideological roots are based upon transcendents; on principles that are outside our own experience. Be they justified by *evolution, primitive societies, material production, or human nature*, they are all insufficient in approaching this crisis. Developing forms of struggle on the plain of immanence, through our experience and the everyday resistances happening everywhere and always will not only forge this new anarchism but it will create a counter-existence to that of the system.

It is this plane of immanence, this self-activity that will form the base of our new methodologies, our new anarchism (s). The fireflies in our neighborhood will light their own paths, communicate with other fireflies, create their own little rebellions, and multiply.

Rhizomes twinkling in the moonlight: *"Rhizomic thinking" is about*

multiplicity, living in/with variety and difference, cultivating productive schizophrenia (the 'cop' and the 'revolutionary' aren't the only voices in our heads). 'Rhizomic people' are multiple, fluid, shape shifting, always resisting the temptation of this or that. They are this, and that, not this, not that, and then some." — Statement from the Maine Center for Justice, Ecology, and Democracy

The firefly is the perfect metaphor for this project. It carves space out of the night while communicating in subtle ways with its brothers and sisters. Our fireflies are not limited in their action, flight pattern, or intensity. Our fireflies are rhizomes, twinkling in the moonlight. They are the in-between, without center, they are networks of interconnected roots. Our fireflies are not the negative of the night; they are part of the night, dancing outside and against the night, ignoring the night, and creating the day to their own rhythms.

Our first task as anti-authoritarians, as revolutionaries, is not to orchestrate these fireflies or invite them to our dance, but to facilitate, expand, further, and create our own dances and hence these spaces and resistances. In this, power is being confronted and created, and we have maintained our immanence, our ontology. We have not separated our theory from reality with the purpose of finding the one true tune. Our second task is to inspire. These dances, and tunes are infectious, along with our series of principles and concepts, visions and dreams.

Our project is a fundamentally new way of looking at the world, a way to deepen our politics. Here we are organizing out of reality; out of already existing resistances, our struggle becomes immanent.

3. The Revolutionary. *"I take my desires for reality because I believe in the reality of my desires!"* — May 1968, Paris

Approaching Mass Powerlessness:

In the wake of September 11th, the mass powerlessness felt by the populace is the ghost of power butting up against their daily reality. In a society with few avenues of participation this reaction is one that can be expected. We also see the desire for community, for communication, to be with others facing this crisis. All of these are opportunities to offer deeper relationships, deeper possi-

bilities and avenues for participation. (Beyond "1,2,3,4 we don't want your racist war" Who is "we"? Who is "your"?). Community dialogs, especially those of Paulo Friere's Popular Education where participants confront, analyze, and act out of their experiences, are the beginning of these new relationships. The simple act of communication with our neighbors and fellow community members is a powerful act. The creation of space for dialog is another plateau to reach. Talking *with* people, not *at* them is a revolutionary act!

The opportunity to question the definitions of this crisis has also arisen, and this is already taking place on many terrains. Whose quality of life are we protecting by bombing Afghanistan, by this "war on terrorism"? Similarly the opportunity has arisen to create deeper relationships with those who we have not before; with Muslims, Arabs, immigrants in our own communities, with the older peace movement. We should not, however, confront the unity of the state with our own unity. Rather we confront their misused solidarity, their unity with multiplicity, with difference, hybrid identities and dynamic potentialities.

The whole desire for an 'anarchist presence' in the anti-war movement is misplaced. The anti-war movement is a middle class construct in itself. A united left against the war is the limitation of voices, of vision and of the potential for revolutionary change. The "revolutionary" voice becomes one among many; one of the voices against the war. It is not just what we are against that separates us from the authoritarian left but also what we are for. Leave the left to have their demos, the slogans, and shitty newspapers all of which don't have the basic elements to communicate with ordinary people. For the anti-authoritarian, the possibility of dialog, deeper relationships, positive institutions and projects, and movements for justice, are just too numerous to ignore. The potentialities for community building, for organizing deeper in our communities, for creating accountable democratic structures, local politics and projects, and for expanding our existing circles cannot be ignored either. We must not allow this crisis to cover up all of the other vital issues,

concerns, and campaigns that deserve our attention.

This does not mean that we don't make demands. We demand by becoming visible. We demand reform and revolution. For example, to demand that this "police action" be taken to the United Nations for resolution, is a demand with many pressure points. Contained within it is the realization, and demand, that the UN is itself an undemocratic institution based upon undemocratic nation states. Similarly demanding that all of the nuclear reactors be turned off plays on the existing concerns of the populace and contains the fact that nuclear power is dangerous, destructive to our environment, etc. Demand that our civil rights be maintained, demand respect and dignity for immigrants, demand a safe food supply, demand the end of work.

Finally these demands, spaces, dialogs, struggles, community building activities, and fireflies in the night are furthering the *accumulation of contradictions*. They are furthering the stresses on our hyper-reality, on the production of images and information, on the systems of power, and on the system itself. All of our activities are forcing open the contradictions in our society. As these contradictions accumulate, as the system attempts to compensate for them, deal with them, commodify them, new possibilities fill these cracks, new worlds become visible and are realized.

New potentialities, New terrains of struggle: This crisis has created new potentialities and new terrains of struggle. Exploring these potentialities and the new possibility for relationships will lead us down interesting and challenging paths. To not seek out these potentialities is to ignore the immanent reality and to lose opportunities to challenge our existing order and to create new ways of being. Seismic shifts have created new mountains for guerillas to fight on; new terrains to struggle on. These guerilla armies are tactics rather than organizations; they are fighting binary opposites, against transcendence. They are multiple, hybrid, always and everywhere, struggling for immanence, for reality. On many mountains the fireflies are dancing. ~

Resisting Panic, Resisting Forgetting

By Alejandro de Acosta

I remember thinking: finally, it's happened. Starhawk said that she had a premonition and perhaps I did as well. Over the next few days I expressed the sentiment in many different ways: for a lot of us, because of our politics, because of our backgrounds, because of some unusual sensitivity, in short, because of ways of living that cross over from history to what pushes into being from beyond history (call it the future, or becoming), there was ultimately little surprise in what happened.

I remember thinking on September 11th... odd expression, isn't it? There are few days about which one can say that one has not forgotten the particulars of what one might have been thinking. On the other hand, surely you and I have forgotten a lot of what we thought on that day. That is to say that I cannot deny that the day's occurrences impressed themselves upon me in a certain way. They provided for *dated* realizations.

But the event is already dust. I have to struggle to recall, for example, two very troubling messages, wherein loved ones said little more than: did you hear the unhappy news? The tone of their voices tore me up. And I remember visualizing the planet Earth, Buckminster Fuller's Spaceship Earth, and the planes and the buildings from some sort of solar system perspective. It's as though my immediate reaction was not to panic, or to be angry, or sad, but to imagine this event from an ecological-geological-galactic perspective. A terrible sadness was circulating that day, a panic which had to be resisted.

I was unsurprised about the brutality of the day. Like many of my friends and compañeros and compañeras, I am well aware of the insistence of violence in our everyday lives, and in the everyday lives of others, in the U.S. and throughout the rest of the earth. Some of us cultivate this awareness because it is important to us. Others do it we have no choice. In both cases we cultivate it as part of our politics. Those of us who

live this way in the modern "security" state called the U.S. prefer not to separate ourselves from the rest of the world population. Again, for some of us this is because we do not in fact live very differently than they do (and here I am thinking of so-called "third world zones" in North America). For others of us it is a point of solidarity and political conscience to refuse to inhabit the "here" of "it can't happen here." I think that I have always felt this way, but the need to remember it, to resist the forces that bid me to forget it, began to grow after the attacks.

On the night of September 11th, I wrote to myself: "it is not a surprise, but an ordeal that is beginning. The question is how to remain politicized in the times to come." My immediate reaction seemed to be one of contemplation, so I began gathering information from the Internet and circulating it in the form of a digest. I called these digests "already we must be thinking and feeling," and sent out nineteen in all from September through December, with texts in English, French, and Spanish. This is what I wrote on the 13th: "Friends, compañeros y compañeras: This is in hopes that we can begin thinking critically about what has happened, and what is surely beginning to happen. These are the first attempts I've seen at theorizing what is going on in the U.S. and around the world right now. Needless to say, these texts come from very different perspectives and I don't agree with everything I am sending you. The point is not to get over our shock or our sadness. It's to couple those feelings with the life-affirming activities of thinking and continuing to create joyful relations with each other."

I consciously became an information gatherer and filter, combing through websites and forwarded messages for radical and alternative viewpoints. I included texts from friends and acquaintances as well as from well-known theorists or analysts, trying to unhinge the prejudice in favor of "expert analysis

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and to promote the possibility of folks just saying what was going on with them. During its lifetime, the list of people who received the digest grew steadily, from a select group of friends and acquaintances to a large mass of people, at least half of whom I have never met.

The aim was to promote critical thinking and feelings of joy and solidarity during a time when both seemed to me to be in very short supply. Binghamton, New York, the small city where I live, responded much as any working-class post-industrial zone would: with a morass of flags covering all available display areas on cars, buildings, and bodies. I walked and ran past these markers of allegiance (to what exactly?). Towards the end of September, I wrote: "Let me once again emphasize that I don't take this to be a news service. It's up to all of us to find the news that matters to us instead of allowing any network (channel, station, website, paper) to tell us what is important. It's also up to us to make the news while we make history - and then find ways to tell each other about it."

During those months, I countered my intake of mainstream coverage of the attacks and the "war" with far more alternative and independent sources. The only television I took in was the week of the attacks: about an hour of live feed projected on to a large screen at the university, and Bush's speech a few days later. On the internet discussion list net-time, Wade Tillett posted a brilliant analysis which summed up most of what I was thinking at the time. The government, suggested Tillett, reserved for itself the privilege of distributing positions on to two sides: with us or against us. In the grotesque either/or that was being imposed, there was little room for political pluralism, let alone anarchist ways of life.

I spent a lot of time reading alternative coverage on the internet. A friend and I had begun doing a "public affairs" radio program on the university's station, and we dedicated several shows to the war. By the first week of October, the time

of our first program, the call was to "return to normal." This is where my attitude changed from resisting the imposition of panic to resisting forgetting: the forgetting of alternatives, of everything that was being threatened in the return to normal. The first program consisted of readings of texts from my first few digests. As time went by, we tried to develop a theory and practice of independent and alternative media as *counter-memory*. We tried to process, talk through, conceptualize as well as feel what was occurring and we tried to be aware that we were doing it live and on the air. I began to think of creating our own live feed, an "it's happening here and now" that referred not to events authoritatively described as important but to our own perspectives on them as a resistant activity. We constantly reminded ourselves and the listeners that we were speaking and thinking in public. There was some risk in doing that. We made the risk part of the example; we said, "everyone should find a way to do this," because we hoped for strength in numbers, and because we knew that it is vastly more powerful to become the media than to consume it, even when it is alternative media.

When we read alternative media coverage from the internet on the air we were trying to cross the digital divide which limits many folks' access to independent and especially radical perspectives. We also experimented with call-in shows where friends from around the country and world reported on activism and perspectives from their region. There was something quite electrifying for me in using the radio show as a time for live sharing of information. It spontaneously generated great feelings of solidarity. Become the media before...

We laughed, joked, and played music as well as discussed the week's occurrences. Other times, we refused to discuss the week's occurrences and read poems. This too was a resistance: resistance to a certain focusing of attention. An independent media tactic: when you pay attention to the mainstream media, always know from where you are listening; do not accept their authoritarian non-place. When you have had enough, or are not in the mood, *by all means, ignore it*. Resisting forgetting *and* resisting

panic.

In the university environment where I move, there had been five or six "teach-ins." As of the last few years, the word "teach-in" was used to describe what amounted to an irregular seminar with a changing cast of professors who provide detailed but not particularly positioned information on whatever the international situation of the moment is. Some friends and I talked about how the tradition of the "teach-in," which goes back to the Vietnam War protest scene, if not earlier, began from a need to gather in a moment of political crisis, possibility, and action so as to collectively understand what is happening. It seemed ironic that the "teach-in," which was resistant to the way in which universities circulate knowledge, had been taken over by what amounts to a very traditional monological setting, with professors as the sole authorized speakers, and students reduced to asking questions.

We planned our alternative to this event: a "dialogue circle." We made a packet, a three hundred page photocopied book, out of texts from the digests and others sent by friends. It was called *Tools for Thinking About and Beyond the "War": Perspectives for Cruel Times*. The idea was to find another way to circulate alternative perspectives and information, beyond the Internet, beyond college radio, and to propose a different setting than the institutionalized "teach-ins." The "dialogue circle" was based on the technique of the reading circle, often used in popular education. A large group of people is divided into smaller groups, each of which chooses one essay. Someone reads the text line by line, and the emphasis is on comprehension. There is a lot of repetition and slow analysis. Discussion of opinions is kept to a minimum (because it is supposed it will happen spontaneously beyond the reading circle). Our first event was small, but it already felt like a real change compared to the sorts of conversations we had all been having. For my circle, I chose to read an article on anti-authoritarian responses to the war efforts, which proposed a form of global popular justice as an alternative to the war. It met with a lot of interest from the non-anarchists gathered with me. They also posed some difficult questions about how such justice would be carried out, and we spent

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are non-existent in the territories. Another obstacle, unfortunately, is the Palestinian National Authority. Arafat's government has proven itself to be corrupt, directionless, and more than willing to serve as a client of the US, even to the extent of shooting unarmed protestors of the US war in Afghanistan. If he thought the population would allow him to get away with it, Arafat would, it seems to me, be happy to rule over an economically dependent and militarily threatened apartheid state. Finally, one must deal with the various Arab states which try to use the Palestinian cause for their own ends, and various religious movements such as Hamas. The latter, though easy to criticize from a non-authoritarian perspective, must be understood in terms of the role it plays in Gaza. Hamas provides the majority of social services to the people of this oppressed and overpopulated strip of land. Brutalized by Israel, and neglected by the PNA, Hamas has been the only group to take up the slack. Thus, organizing that rejects them out of hand or in all respects is simply impossible.

This applies even more to the role of Hizbullah in the south of Lebanon. They provide medical, pension, and most other social services there. As a result, they are treated as the de facto government by the vast majority of people. They, as well as a deep commitment to religion, are a fact of life in the area.

I recently spent a week in Beirut meeting with numerous activists who are trying to put together a non-religious, non-aligned progressive movement in the country. All were eager to build connections with the Global Justice Movement and the Palestinian solidarity movement in the west. But the obstacles are enormous. Direct and open protest can result in immediate arrest. Communication is always subject to surveillance. It is enormously difficult to remain independent of dominant political parties, which are generally tied to particular religious groups. Thus, some students at American University in Beirut told me of trying to start a small weekly student paper. Within a week of

meeting, before publishing any copies, they were contacted by three national parties trying to pressure them to affiliate.

The main point is to give a sense of just how different activist politics are in the Middle East and Central Asia. The threats, opportunities, factional lines, assumptions, etc. are very different from what we are used to. Above all, and before anything, we need to learn about this. We must send delegations to countries at the front lines of US imperialism, simply to learn from local activists, and to hear their ideas about how we can work together for liberation. We need to be open to forms of discourse – especially religious ones – that are uncomfortable for many western anarchists. We need to think creatively, openly, and together, about ways to connect our work, for our mutual liberation. What the results of that thinking will be, I cannot predict. I have no easy answers to any of this, but I know that much rests on our ability to make progress on these issues.~

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an interesting couple of hours discussing the possibility of international communication among masses of people and the problems with parliamentary forms.

Call it another strategy for resisting forgetting or creating resistant counter-memory. Call it the forging of a public space under difficult circumstances! For those far from the academic milieu, believe me: it is not so easy to find a space to gather and talk openly in. This not only compounds but is directly linked to the exclusion of poor and disadvantaged folks from this space. My friends and I needed very badly to do our resistant thinking in a public and shared space, to carry what had been private, personalized, and thus almost necessarily sort of paranoid and alienated talking into a public space where it could be transformed in dialogue with others.

Resisting forgetting *and* resisting panic. In both cases it's about maintaining our priorities as anarchists or anti-authoritarian thinkers and activists. It is a matter of living in resistance to the nation and the state; not confusing its priorities with ours. As always, this is a matter of resisting the spread of fear that comes from both directions – the state's war machine, and the terroristic war machine that has perhaps escaped the state, but which bears the marks of its contact with the state. It is also a matter of making our non-allegiance to those entities or processes visible, communicable, public: on the air, in the street, in any space that opens or is opened for political discussions.

In this time of shutting down of political pluralism, in this time of the apparent vanishing of all religions except dueling monotheisms, it seems ever more

important to insist on other politics, other religions, other cultures, and other ways of life, which continue to struggle and resist as living alternatives. In so far as we live these alternatives, or can communicate with them (though there is nothing easy about this communication), we resist the flows of stupidity that the state relies on for its distribution of sadness and identities. When I move in public, I try to embody this pluralistic outlook. That it has become more difficult does not make me want to do it any less – to the contrary. ~

Anyone interested in copies of the "thinking and feeling digest" or in purchasing a copy of Tools for Thinking About and Beyond the "War" can contact me at le-jandr@hotmail.com. Thanks to Joshua Beckman for help with this piece.

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