

# Strategic Guidelines for an Anti-Tech Movement

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Force is the final arbiter, vigorous intervention is the keynote, and victory goes to those who have the courage and the discipline to see things through to the end. Such a view is characteristic of groups which seek to catapult themselves out of obscurity into history when, as it seems to them, all the forces of society are arrayed in opposition.

— Philip Selznick<sup>1</sup>

## Section 1

No specific route to victory for an anti-tech movement can be laid out in advance. The movement will have to wait for opportunities that in due course will enable it to bring about the collapse of the technological system. The exact nature of the opportunities and the time of their arrival will in general be unpredictable, so the movement will have to prepare itself for successful exploitation on short notice of any and all such opportunities.

First, the movement must build its own internal sources of power. It will have to create a strong, cohesive organization consisting of individuals who are absolutely committed to the elimination of the technological system. Numbers will be a secondary consideration. A numerically small organization built of high-quality personnel will be far more effective than a much larger organization in which the majority of members are of mediocre quality.<sup>2</sup> The organization will have to develop its understanding of the dynamics of social movements so that it will recognize opportunities when they arrive and will know how to exploit them.

Second, the movement must build power in relation to its social environment. It must win respect for its ideas, its vigor, its effectiveness. If it is widely feared and hated, so much the better; but it must earn for itself a reputation as the purest and most uncompromisingly revolutionary of all oppositional movements. Thus it will be the movement to which many individuals will turn upon the arrival of a severe crisis in which people have become desperate and have lost all respect for and all confidence in the existing form of society.

Third, to help pave the way for this loss of respect and confidence, the movement should do what it can to undermine people's faith in the technological system. This is likely to be the lightest of the movement's burdens, because much of the work will be done without any effort on the part of the movement. For one thing, the system's own failures will help to undermine confidence in it. For another, the spoken and written words of disenchanted intellectuals, especially those concerned with environmental issues, will act (and are already acting) to break down people's confidence in the existing

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<sup>1</sup> Selznick, p.113.

<sup>2</sup> See Kaczynski, Letters to David Skrbina: Aug. 29, 2004, last three paragraphs; Sept. 18, 2004; March 17, 2005, Part II.B.

social order. Very few of these intellectuals are potential revolutionaries,<sup>3</sup> therefore an anti-tech movement should not support them directly. But the movement can promote the decline of confidence in the existing social order by calling attention to the pervasiveness and the irremediable character of the system's failures and by making the system look weak or vulnerable whenever possible.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter we will try to fill in some of the details of the picture that is roughly sketched in the foregoing paragraphs.

## Section 2

Revolutions almost never are successfully planned out long in advance of their actual occurrence. This is merely one instance of the principle that specific historical events are, in general, unpredictable.<sup>5</sup> Irving Horowitz correctly observed that revolutions are carried out either without a previous program of action, or even in direct violation of such a program,<sup>6</sup> and Herbert Matthews noted that "of all the revolutionary leaders of modern times, only Hitler outlined his program and stuck to it."<sup>7</sup> Revolutionaries have to proceed by trial and error, and by grasping (usually unforeseen) opportunities as they arise.<sup>8</sup> As Lenin put it: "We often have to grope our way along ... . Who could ever make a gigantic revolution, knowing in advance how to carry it through to the end?"<sup>9</sup> In January 1917, Lenin did not believe that any kind of revolution would be possible in Russia during his own lifetime.<sup>10</sup> He was able to make the Bolsheviks masters of Russia only because he had the acumen to recognize and exploit the unexpected opportunity presented by the February 1917 insurrection in St. Petersburg.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Hoffer, §§ 104, 110, 111.

<sup>4</sup> Smelser, p. 353, notes that when the existing social order loses its appearance of invulnerability, new possibilities for revolution may open up.

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter One.

<sup>6</sup> Horowitz, p. 126. Horowitz, pp. 63-65, describes how Fidel Castro groped his way through the Cuban Revolution, learning from experience as he went along.

<sup>7</sup> Matthews, p. 123. I seriously doubt that Hitler could have outlined his program with any degree of precision. "In 1928, before the onset of the Great Depression in Germany, Hitler received less than 3 percent of the vote," and it was the Depression that enabled him to become powerful. NEB (2003), Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," p. 416. I've had neither the opportunity nor much inclination to read *Mein Kampf*, but I find it hard to believe that Hitler, in the early 1920s when he wrote his book, could have predicted the occurrence and the approximate time of the Depression.

<sup>8</sup> See Alinsky, pp. 5-6, 45, 69, 136, 153-55, 164, 165-66, 168, 183.

<sup>9</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Three, Appendix Two, p. 409.

<sup>10</sup> Radzinsky, p. 202. NEB (2010), Vol. 22, "Lenin," p. 934.

<sup>11</sup> Trotsky, beginning on p. 298 of Vol. One and all through the rest of the history of the Revolution.

## Section 3

Major opportunities, however, may be a long time in coming; the revolutionary movement may have to lie in wait for them.<sup>12</sup> This doesn't mean that the movement can afford to relax and take it easy. On the contrary, while it is waiting the movement must remain hard at work, not only to build its strength so that it will be able to take full advantage of opportunities when they arrive, but also because an inactive movement will die or shrink to an apathetic rump. If a movement's members are not kept occupied with purposeful work, most will lose interest and drift away.<sup>13</sup>

Another reason why the movement must remain active is that it is not enough for revolutionaries to wait passively for opportunities; the opportunities may have to be created in part by the revolutionaries themselves. Some serious failure of the existing social order will probably have to occur independently of anything the revolutionaries can do, but whether such a failure is severe enough to provide an opportunity for overthrow of the system may depend on previous revolutionary activity. In Russia, for example, the underlying weakness of the tsarist regime was not caused by revolutionaries. But the opportunity for revolution was based on the regime's defeat in World War I, and revolutionary activity may have contributed to that defeat, for "[i]n no other belligerent country were political conflicts waged as intensively during the war as in Russia, preventing the effective mobilization of the rear."<sup>14</sup> Later, it was the spontaneous and unexpected insurrection of the workers of St. Petersburg that gave the Bolsheviks their great opportunity, and that insurrection probably would have been no more than a disorganized and ineffective outburst of frustration if the Bolsheviks had not previously indoctrinated the workers with Marxist ideas,<sup>15</sup> thus providing them with a theory and an ideal that made it possible for their insurrection to be purposeful, organized, and effective.

## Section 4

From section 2, above, it follows that a revolutionary movement has to be prepared to respond successfully to the unexpected. If a program of action is to cover any appreciable span of time, the movement must not be committed to it in such a way that the program cannot be altered or discarded as unforeseen developments may require. In other words, the movement must maintain flexibility.

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<sup>12</sup> Hoffer, § 89. Smelser, p. 381. Trotsky, Vol. One, p. xviii.

<sup>13</sup> Selznick, p. 23n6 (quoting Lenin, "A Letter to a Comrade on our Problems of Organization," in Lenin on Organization, pp. 124-25). Alinsky, pp. 77-78, 120.

<sup>14</sup> NEB (2003), Vol. 28, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," p. 1000.

<sup>15</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, Chapt. VIII, pp. 136-152. Cf. Kaczynski, Letter to David Skrbina: Sept. 18, 2004, fourth paragraph.

Students of military tactics and strategy have long recognized the importance of flexibility.<sup>16</sup> Lenin demanded "tactical flexibility" in revolutionary work,<sup>17</sup> and Trotsky attributed the power of the Bolsheviks to the fact that they had "always united revolutionary implacableness with the greatest flexibility."<sup>18</sup> Mao Zedong wrote:

[I]n the practice of... changing society, mens original ideas, theories, plans or programmes are seldom realized without any alteration... [I]deas, theories, plans or programmes are usually altered partially and sometimes even wholly, because of the discovery of unforeseen circumstances in the course of practice. That is to say, it does happen that the original ideas, theories, plans or programmes fail to correspond with reality either in whole or in part and are wholly or partially incorrect. In many instances, failures have to be corrected many times before errors in knowledge can be corrected and... the anticipated results can be achieved in practice...

. . . [T]rue revolutionary leaders must not only be good at correcting their ideas, theories, plans or programmes when errors are discovered, ... but... they must ensure that the proposed new revolutionary tasks and new working programmes correspond to the new changes in the situation.<sup>19</sup>

This is one way of describing the need for flexibility.

## Section 5

As argued in Chapter Three, the single ultimate goal of a revolutionary movement today must be the total collapse of the worldwide technological system.<sup>20</sup> One of this writer's correspondents has suggested that, because of the acute physical danger and hardship to which everyone would be exposed following a collapse of the technological system, a movement that takes such a collapse as its goal will be resisted by the overwhelming majority of the world's population and therefore will be unable to accomplish anything.

Undoubtedly, if you held a referendum today on the question of whether the system should be made to collapse, ninety percent, at the very least, of the inhabitants of industrialized countries would vote "no." Even in a crisis situation in which people had lost all respect for and all confidence in the system, it may well be that a majority, though a much smaller one, would still vote against total collapse. But the assumption that this would be a serious obstacle to revolution is based on what we may call the "democratic fallacy": the notion that the number of people favoring one side or another determines the outcome of social struggles as it determines the outcome of democratic

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<sup>16</sup> NEB (2003), Vol. 29, "War, Theory and Conduct of," pp. 647, 660. Mao, pp. 58-61. Dunnigan & Nofi, p. 54. Parker, p. 316.

<sup>17</sup> Dorpalen, p. 332.

<sup>18</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 315. See also Selznick, pp. 22, 70, 217.

<sup>19</sup> Mao, pp. 78-79.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter Three, Part IV.

elections. Actually the outcome of social struggles is determined not primarily by numbers but by the dynamics of social movements.

## Section 6

It goes without saying that the real revolutionaries—the members of the deeply committed cadre that forms the core of the movement—will be prepared to accept any amount of hardship and the greatest risk, or even a certainty, of death in the service of their cause. We need only think of the early Christian martyrs; of Al Theda, the Taliban, and the Islamic suicide bombers; or of the assassins of the Russian Revolution. After a Social Revolutionary named Kalyaev assassinated a Russian grand duke in 1905, the duke's wife visited him in prison and told him: "Repent... and I will beg the sovereign to give you your life." Kalyaev replied: "No! I do not repent. I must die for my deed and I will. ... My death will be more useful to my cause than [the grand duke's] death."<sup>21</sup>

Later, in 1918, when Fanny Kaplan put two bullets into Lenin, she surely realized that she would pay with her life.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, when Charlotte Corday assassinated Jean-Paul Marat during the French Revolution, she must have known that she would face the guillotine.<sup>23</sup> The extreme Irish nationalists who carried out the uprising of April 1916 certainly knew that they were taking desperate risks, and a small minority among them were intentionally seeking martyrdom. Many of those who were subsequently executed "expressed in their last words... confidence that their deaths were a sort of triumph."<sup>24</sup>

## Section 7

But it's not only a tiny minority of hard-core revolutionaries who will accept suffering and the gravest risks in the service of what they regard as critically important goals. Many ordinary people become heroes and show astonishing courage when there is a severe disruption of their society or an acute threat to their most cherished values, or when they are inspired by what seems to them a noble purpose.

It has been said that "man is capable of standing superhuman suffering if only he feels sure that there is some point and purpose to it."<sup>25</sup> This statement has been confirmed by experience, not only in the histories of the French, Russian, and other revolutions, but in many other situations as well. In World War II, for instance, the Russians never lost their will to resist in the face of the death, destruction, and savage

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<sup>21</sup> Radzinsky, p. 82.

<sup>22</sup> NEB (2010), Vol. 22, "Lenin," p. 936. NEB (2003), Vol. 28, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," p. 1002. Radzinsky, p. 375.

<sup>23</sup> NEB (2010), Vol. 3, "Corday, Charlotte," p. 624.

<sup>24</sup> Kee, pp. 564, 578.

<sup>25</sup> Kaufmann, editor's preface to "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," p. 111.

cruelties inflicted on them by the German invaders.<sup>26</sup> For that matter, the morale of the German civilian population was never broken by the horrific Allied bombing campaigns that reduced many of their cities to rubble and sometimes killed tens of thousands of people in a single operation.<sup>27</sup> The Allied air-crews who carried out bombing and other missions in disputed air-space over Europe suffered in turn a frightful rate of attrition. For example, of the American pilots who undertook missions over German-occupied Poland during World

War II, about three out of four were killed.<sup>28</sup> Yet the survivors kept flying. Meanwhile, on the ground, many infantrymen suffered equal danger and far greater physical hardship, but they too continued to fight.<sup>29</sup>

Most of the civilians in the examples of the foregoing paragraph did not suffer hardship or danger voluntarily; they showed their courage merely by continuing to function well under the atrocious conditions imposed on them by circumstances beyond their control. Some of the military men no doubt volunteered for service, but probably many of these at the time they volunteered failed to appreciate fully what they were getting into. This was certainly the case with Audie Murphy, the most decorated

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<sup>26</sup> Ulam, pp. 551-52. Thurston, e.g., pp. 163,215,225-26, 282n76. NEB (2003), Vol. 29, "World Wars," pp. 1009, 1023 (table).

<sup>27</sup> Keegan, pp. 420-432. World Book Encyclopedia (2011), Vol. 21, "World War II," p. 482 ("German morale failed to crack"). But: Parker, p. 345 (strategic bombing "had a significant impact on German morale"). Gilbert, *European Powers*, pp. 264,266. Manchester, pp. 527-29 ("Winston Churchill promised the Commons that Germany 'will be subjected to an ordeal the like of which has never been experienced by a country in continuity, severity, and magnitude.'"), 647-48. NEB (2003), Vol. 29, "World Wars," pp. 1020, 1024. See also Paz. In contrast to that of German civilians, the morale of the Japanese civilian population was "brought to breaking-point" by a bombing campaign similar to that carried out over Germany. Keegan, p. 432. The reason was probably that Japanese housing (unlike German) was built of wood, with the result that incendiary bombing had a far more devastating effect on Japanese cities than on German ones. Dunnigan & Nofi, p.109.

<sup>28</sup> Wolk, p. 5. This may be an extreme example, but the usual attrition rate among Allied air crews was severe enough. Keegan, p. 433. Astor, p. 360. During 1943, "some eighty-three per cent [of British bomber crews] were failing to complete unscathed their tours of thirty operations. Of courage they had plenty, but there was nothing but lip-biting gloom registered on those faces." A. Read & D. Fisher, p. 127. During summer & autumn 1943, the Americans lost 30% of their bomber crews every month. Parker, p. 345. See also World Book Encyclopedia (2011), loc. cit.; Parker, p. 346. It's true of course that air crews' morale did suffer when attrition became excessive. Keegan, p. 428. Astor, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Murphy, *passim*. Dunnigan & Nofi, pp. 403,625-26. It's worth noting that—apart from the acute risk of being killed or crippled—the physical hardships suffered by American soldiers in World War II were minor in comparison with what other soldiers in other wars have suffered. E.g., when Washington's defeated, starving, and half-naked army went into winter quarters at Valley Forge in 1777, many of the men had no shoes, so that "the soldiers of the Revolution [could be] tracked by the blood of their feet on the frozen ground." Martin, pp. 58, 161. The accuracy of Martin's memories, written down half a century after the events, may well be questioned, but sober history confirms that on the way to Valley Forge thousands of Washington's men were "barefoot and otherwise naked" and that the following winter was one of "semi-starvation." NEB (2003), Vol. 29, "Washington, George," p. 703. Yet the core of the rag-tag army held together and lived to fight again.



American soldier of World War II, who was totally naive about war when he enlisted.<sup>30</sup> Yet there are abundant examples of people—not just a tiny minority of hard-core revolutionaries, but large numbers of more-or-less ordinary people—who in critical situations have voluntarily chosen to take desperate risks, with what we can assume was full knowledge of what they were risking, in the service of a cause or in fulfillment of what they believed to be their duty. In 1922, when the Irish War of Independence had gone on long enough so that its desperate and bloody character was unmistakable, there was still no shortage of recruits, “new eager young warriors anxious to emulate their elders.”<sup>31</sup> Nor does there seem to have been any shortage of recruits to the French and Polish resistance movements during World War II. These risked not only death, as the Irish did, but excruciating torture as well. Charles de Gaulle’s personal representative with the French Resistance, Jean Moulin, was captured and tortured to death by the Gestapo,<sup>32</sup> yet he never cracked, never gave up his secrets.<sup>33</sup> “In 1941 Free France had sent Captain Scamaroni to [Corsica] with a mission to prepare action there. ... Unfortunately, our valiant delegate had fallen into the hands of the Italians ... Tortured horribly, Scamaroni had died to keep his secrets.”<sup>34</sup>

Even for causes in which they have no personal stake, some people will risk death, and worse. Thus thousands of non-Jewish Poles participated in efforts to save Jews from the Nazis. In helping Jews the Poles risked death not only for themselves but for their families as well.<sup>35</sup> A Polish woman named Irena Sendler, credited with helping to save 2,500 Jewish children, “was captured by the Nazis in 1943 and tortured but refused to say who her co-conspirators were. During one session her captors broke her feet and legs ...” She survived only because her comrades in the Resistance bribed a Gestapo officer to help her escape.<sup>36</sup>

It should be noted, too, that whether they are hard-core revolutionaries or ordinary people, whether they assume their risks voluntarily or involuntarily, many of those who go through extreme danger or hardship for what they believe to be worthy purposes experience deep fulfillment from their “heroic” activities. They may even enjoy them. A former inmate of a German prisoner-of-war camp in World War II wrote of his unsuccessful and eventually successful attempts to escape:

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<sup>30</sup> Murphy, pp. 4-8.

<sup>31</sup> Kee, p. 732.

<sup>32</sup> Stafford, p. 193.

<sup>33</sup> Shattuck, p. 21.

<sup>34</sup> De Gaulle, pp. 461-62.

<sup>35</sup> Polish American journal, Sept. 2012, p. 8; Feb. 2013, pp. 4, 7. Knab, pp. 1, 6. Lukowski & Zawadzki, pp. 261-63. For balance, it should be noted that there was a great deal of anti-Semitism in Poland at the time, and some Poles even helped the Nazis to round up Jews. Thurston, p. 224. Lukowski & Zawadzki, loc. cit. Interestingly, one of the two women who founded Żegota, an underground organization dedicated to saving Jews, had been “generally considered... anti-Semitic” before the war. Jacobson, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Woo, p. 11B.

I feel I have quaffed deeply of the intoxicating cup of excitement... . I can think of no sport that is the peer of escape, where freedom, life, and loved ones are the prize of victory, and death the possible though by no means inevitable price of failure.<sup>37</sup>

As World War II drew to a close:

Apart from the Communist leaders, who aimed at a definite goal, the resistance fighters as a whole were somewhat disoriented. As the enemy withdrew... they had been tempted, like Goethe's Faust, to say to the moment, 'Stay, you are so splendid!' ... Nostalgia was upon them. Especially since these ardent and adventurous men had experienced, in the height of danger, the somber attractions of the clandestine struggle, which they would not renounce.<sup>38</sup>

Much more recently, with the arrival of peace in Northern Ireland, the withdrawal of these same "somber attractions" seems to have had a decidedly negative effect on the youth of that country. In 2009 a journalist reported his conversations with a Catholic priest, Father Aidan Troy:

[T]he suicide rate among Belfast's youth has risen sharply since the Troubles ended, largely because, the priest believes, the sense of camaraderie and shared struggle provided by the paramilitary groups has been replaced by ennui and despair. 'So many young people get into drinking and drugs early on,' Troy says.<sup>39</sup>

Celia Sanchez, who had been a revolutionary guerrillera in Cuba, reminisced in 1965 about the dangers and hardships she had gone through with Fidel Castro's band in Sierra Maestra: "Ah, but those were the best times, weren't they? We were all so very happy then. Really. We will never be so happy again, will we? Never...".<sup>40</sup>

In an otherwise rather maudlin article, an American veteran of the Iraq war conceded that his return to civilian life had its drawbacks: "I miss that daily sense of purpose, survive or die, that simply can't be replicated in everyday existence."<sup>41</sup>

## Section 8

The purpose of the foregoing examples is not to glorify danger, suffering, or warfare. Their purpose is to show that people—even the members of modern technological

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<sup>37</sup> P.R. Reid, p. 11.

<sup>38</sup> De Gaulle, p. 713.

<sup>39</sup> Hammer, p. 69.

<sup>40</sup> Lee Lockwood, p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> Gallagher, p. 45.

society, who in normal times are oriented primarily toward security and comfort—will not necessarily choose the easiest road, or the one that seems least dangerous in the short term, when their society is in turmoil, when they are desperate, angry, or horrified at the turn that events are taking, or when it no longer seems possible to maintain their habitual pattern of living. Under such circumstances many will choose a heroic course of action, even a course that subjects themselves and their loved ones to the greatest risks and hardships—if only there are leaders who can energize them, organize them, and give them a sense of purpose. It will be the task of revolutionaries to provide that kind of leadership when the system arrives at a crisis.

At such a time, if the revolutionaries have done and continue to do their work well, they should be able to attract wide support in spite of all the risks and hardships that the revolutionary program entails. This is not to say that the revolutionaries will succeed in winning the support of a majority of the population. It's much more likely that they will be able to organize and lead only a fairly small minority. But "it is not always the physical majority that is decisive; rather, it is superiority of moral force that tips the political balance." (Simon Bolivar).<sup>42</sup> In the event of a sufficiently serious failure of the existing social order the vast majority of the population will lose all respect for it and all confidence in it, hence will make no effective effort to defend it. Alinsky stated the case very clearly when he wrote that the "time is ... ripe for revolution" when

masses of our people have reached the point of disillusionment with past ways and values. They don't know what will work but they do know that the prevailing system is self-defeating, frustrating, and hopeless. They won't act for change but won't strongly oppose those who do.<sup>43</sup>

Under these circumstances a great many people will have become hopeless, apathetic, and passive, while most of the rest will be concerned only to save their own skins and those of their loved ones. It is to be expected that the existing power-structure will be in disarray, disoriented, and riven by internal conflict, so that it will do a poor job of organizing and leading any small minority that may still be motivated to defend the system. If, therefore, the revolutionaries act effectively to inspire, organize, and lead their own minority, they will hold the decisive share of power.

## Section 9

A failure of the existing social order may not always be needed to provide revolutionaries with an opportunity. It's not clear that there was any grave failure of the

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<sup>42</sup> Bolivar, "Memoria dirigida a los ciudadanos de la Nueva Granada por un Caraqueño," in Soriano, p. 54.

<sup>43</sup> Alinsky, p. xxii. See also p. 189 (referring to "a willingness to abstain from hard opposition as changes take place").

social order in Ireland prior to the revolution of 1916-1922; certainly the British authorities against whom the revolution was directed were by no means in disarray or otherwise weak. Yet the revolution did occur.<sup>44</sup> Ordinarily, however, an opportunity for revolution depends on some serious failure of the existing social order.

The Reformation was possible only because the corruption of the Catholic Church led many people to lose their respect for it. The revolutions of the early 19th century that won independence for Spain's American colonies probably would not have occurred if the weakness of the Spanish monarchy had not been demonstrated through its defeat by Napoleon and in other ways. The Chinese revolution of 1911 was largely a result of the repeated humiliations inflicted on China by the Western powers and Japan, against which the Manchu (or Qing, Ch'ing) Dynasty was unable to defend itself. The Russian revolutionaries were given their opportunity by the ignominious military defeats of the Tsarist regime in World War I. In Germany, the Nazis were a minor party up to the onset of the Great Depression; Hitler was able to seize power only because the German government was weak and unable to deal with the economic crisis.<sup>45</sup>

In each of the foregoing examples there undoubtedly was a broadly generalized loss of respect for the prevailing social order, and in the last two cases it is probably safe to say that there was widespread anger and desperation on the part of some people, hopelessness on the part of others. In today's world a prerequisite for revolution most likely will be a situation of the latter type, involving widespread anger, desperation, and hopelessness. Revolutionaries need to be capable of making use of such a situation.

To illustrate with a hypothetical example, let's suppose that in the coming decades the replacement of human workers by increasingly advanced technology will lead to severe, chronic unemployment throughout the technologically developed part of the world.<sup>46</sup> This will not necessarily produce a crisis serious enough to endanger the existence of the system, for people will tend to react to chronic unemployment with apathy, passivity, and hopelessness. There will be anger, too, which may lead to riots like those seen in Spain and Greece in 2011-12,<sup>47</sup> but these poorly organized, largely purposeless outbursts of frustration (really manifestations of hopelessness) accomplished little or nothing.

Compare this ineffectual rioting with the "Arab Spring" revolution in Egypt (2011), in which intelligent leadership harnessed people's anger and made it into a tool for the extraction of major concessions from the power-structure. The Egyptian revolution failed in the end, but for present purposes that is irrelevant. The point here is simply that skillful revolutionary leaders can harness people's anger and frustration and turn it to useful purposes.

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<sup>44</sup> See Kee, pp. 519-592.

<sup>45</sup> NEB (2003), Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," p. 416.

<sup>46</sup> See note 128 to Chapter Two.

<sup>47</sup> See, e.g.: *The Economist*, July 16, 2011, p. 59; Sept. 10, 2011, p. 77. *The Week*, April 13, 2012, p. 16. *USA Today*, Sept. 27, 2012, p. 6B.

Anti-tech revolutionaries, of course, can't be satisfied with extracting concessions from the power-structure; they have to bring it down altogether. If, as we've hypothesized, there is severe, long-lasting unemployment throughout the technologically advanced part of the world, most of those who still have jobs will be frightened and will have lost their respect for the system, but will be motivated only to hold on to their jobs as long as they can. The unemployed will be either apathetic and hopeless, or angry and desperate, or both. If there is widespread rioting it will put the power-structure under stress, but will not seriously threaten its survival. Well-prepared revolutionaries, however, should be capable of organization and leadership that will put people's anger and desperation to work, not in mere rioting, but for purposeful action. From our present standpoint the nature of the purposeful action can only be a matter for conjecture, but, just to take a speculative example, the revolutionaries might extract concessions from the power-structure as the Egyptians did, with the difference that the concessions would have to go far enough so that they would deeply humiliate the power-structure. This could be expected to break down the morale of the individuals comprising the power-structure and lead to sharp internal divisions and conflicts within the power-structure, throwing it into disarray. Once this stage had been reached, the prospects for the overthrow of the power-structure would be excellent.

But let's remember that the foregoing scenario represents a purely hypothetical route to revolution that we've offered only for illustrative purposes. Revolution may take a very different route in reality.

## Section 10

It is important to recognize that a successful revolutionary movement may start out as a tiny and despised group of "crackpots" who are taken seriously by no one but themselves. The movement may remain insignificant and powerless for many years before it finds its opportunity and achieves success. "Beliefs that are potentially revolutionary may exist temporally long before strain arises to activate these beliefs as determinants of a value-oriented movement; revolutionary organizations may lie in wait for conditions of conduciveness, upon which they then capitalize."<sup>48</sup>

In 1847 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were just a couple of eccentrics who prepared the Communist Manifesto for an obscure group called the Communist League, which had only a few hundred members and soon dissolved.<sup>49</sup> In Ireland, nationalist ideas were kept alive for several decades only by a minuscule minority of extremists

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<sup>48</sup> Smelser, p. 381.

<sup>49</sup> Marx & Engels, pp. 21-22 (Introduction by Francis B. Randall), 46 (Engels's preface to English edition of 1888). Dorpalen, p. 211.

who had very little support among the general population until the uprising of April 1916 reactivated the revolutionary process.<sup>50</sup>

Rdel Castro said, “I began a revolution with eighty-two men. If I had to do it again, I would do it with ten or fifteen and absolute faith.”<sup>51</sup> Castro actually started his revolution with only about a dozen men, because three days after he landed in Cuba with his eighty-two they were attacked by the forces of the dictator, Batista; nearly all were killed or captured, and no more than twelve, or possibly fifteen,<sup>52</sup> were left to carry on the struggle in the Sierra Maestra. Even at its peak two years later the guerrilla band amounted to only about 800 men, as against Batista’s army of 30,000.<sup>53</sup> Yet Castro won.

Such a victory of course could not be a purely military one, nor was it achieved by Castro’s guerrilleros alone. Castro’s victory was primarily a political one, and was possible only because the Cuban people had no respect for or confidence in the Batista regime. “The dictator was politically incompetent and unable to retain the loyalty even of his own army, which proved itself decidedly reluctant to fight the rebels. And Batista was really overthrown by a coalition of forces, of which Castro’s guerrilla band was not the only important component. What enabled Castro to prevail over the other elements of the coalition and emerge as master of Cuba was his skill as a politician, propagandist, and organizer. While his military action played an indispensable role, it did so mainly through its political and psychological effect.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Kee, pp. 391, 405, 440-564. E.g., p. 537 (“Redmond... continued rightly to advise Birrell that these extremist forces represented only a minute proportion of Irish opinion...”).

<sup>51</sup> I’ve been told that Castro is thus quoted by Pandita, p. 35. I have not seen Pandita’s book, but the quote is confirmed, to a close approximation, by Shapiro, p. 139, and the original source is given as “NY. Times, 22 Apr. 1959.”

<sup>52</sup> Estimates of the number range from seven to fifteen. Horowitz, p. 26. Russell, pp. 22, 23, 116, 117. NEB (2003), Vol. 2, “Castro, Fidel,” p. 941. See also Matthews, pp. 93-98.

<sup>53</sup> For Batista’s army, NEB (2003), loc. cit., gives the figure 30,000. Russell, pp. 17, 22-23, cites estimates ranging from 29,000 to 50,000 (plus 7,000 police). For the size of Castro’s force, NEB (2003), loc. cit., says 800 men. Estimates cited by Russell, pp. 23, 163, confirm that until just before Batista’s fall the maximum size attained by the force under Castro’s own command was about 800, but indicate that there were other guerrilla bands not under Castro’s direct control, so that the total number of guerrilleros was somewhere between 1,000 and 1,500. At the very end of the rebellion “thousands” (the figures 8,000 and 40,000 are mentioned) “joined” Castro (though no reason is given to believe that most of these were under Castro’s own control). Russell, pp. 23, 116, 163. But this did not happen until at most a few days before Batista fled the country on Jan. 1, 1959. Ibid. In other words, it was only after Batista had already been effectively defeated that “thousands” jumped on the revolutionary bandwagon.

<sup>54</sup> For this whole paragraph see the following: NEB (2003), loc. cit. (“Castro’s propaganda efforts proved particularly effective...”). Horowitz, pp. 62-65, 71-72, 127, 181 (“Castro’s ability to manipulate the media is famous...”). NEB (2003), Vol. 21, “International Relations,” p. 865, says: “Fidel Castro took to the Sierra Maestra ... and made pretensions of fighting a guerrilla war. In fact, Castro’s campaign was largely propaganda..., and the real struggle for Cuba was fought out in the arenas of Cuban and American public opinion.” According to Carrillo, p. 65: “[T]he victory of the 26th of July Movement... was possible because that movement was not a socialist party but a kind of national front that later split as the movement advanced, and in which the powerful personality of Fidel Castro and his closest

The point to be emphasized here, though, is that when Castro, leading his tiny band of a dozen men, looked up at the Sierra Maestra and said, “Now Batista will be defeated!,”<sup>55</sup> most people would have thought him mad. Yet Batista was indeed defeated and Castro did take control of Cuba.

In Russia at the beginning of the 20th century the revolutionaries comprised an insignificant minority and were regarded as “cranks.”<sup>56</sup> The Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, of which the Bolsheviks formed a part, consisted of only a few hundred individuals.<sup>57</sup> According to Lenin:

Prior to January 22... 1905, the revolutionary party of Russia consisted of a small handful of people, and the reformists of those days... derisively called us a ‘sect’... Within a few months, however, the picture completely changed. The hundreds of revolutionary Social Democrats ‘suddenly’ grew into thousands; the thousands became leaders of between two and three million proletarians...<sup>58</sup>

The 1905 revolution was a failure, but it did help prepare the way for the successful revolution of 1917. Up to the latter year, nevertheless, the Bolsheviks remained weak. At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, three of the seven members of their St. Petersburg committee were police spies, and soon afterward the Bolsheviks’ centralized organization was destroyed by the arrest of their delegates in the Duma (the Russian parliament).<sup>59</sup> On the very eve of the opening episode of the 1917 revolution the Bolshevik leaders were scattered in exile, and no one (except possibly the police) paid any attention to them.<sup>60</sup> But less than a year later they had made themselves masters of the vast Russian Empire—something like one-sixth of the world’s land surface (discounting Antarctica).<sup>61</sup>

The Bolsheviks had prepared themselves long in advance of the outbreak of the revolution. They had built a cohesive cadre of professional revolutionists who were

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collaborators brought about a subsequent turn toward socialism, while the right-wing sector openly went over to the American side.” Information in greater detail is provided by Russell, pp. 17-28, 40-41, 78, 88, 115-120, 162-64.

<sup>55</sup> Matthews, p. 96.

<sup>56</sup> Gilbert, *European Powers*, p. 24.

<sup>57</sup> See *ibid.*; NEB (2010), Vol. 22, “Lenin,” pp. 933-34; Selznick, p. 176n2; and the quotation of Lenin cited in note 58 below. In 1894, according to Lenin, “you could count the [Russian] Social-Democrats on your fingers.” This in “What Is to Be Done?,” Chapt. III, section E; in Christman, p. 118. But no Social Democratic Party formally existed in Russia until 1898 at the earliest. Ulam, pp. 33, 49. Stalin, *History of the Communist Party*, first chapter, Section 4, p. 34. But see also *ibid.*, Section 3, p. 29.

<sup>58</sup> Selznick, pp. 103-04, quoting Lenin, “Lecture on the 1905 revolution,” in *Collected Works*, 1942 edition, Vol. 19, pp. 389-390.

<sup>59</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, pp. 37, 40.

<sup>60</sup> Radzinsky, pp. 133-34, 234.

<sup>61</sup> The “one-sixth” figure is often cited; e.g., by Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 121; Stalin, *History of the Communist Party*, Conclusion, p. 484; and Ulam, p. 288. But these writers fail to note that the figure is correct only if Antarctica is excluded.

disciplined, purposeful, strongly motivated, well led, and reasonably unified. The Bolsheviks were effective organizers, and, because they understood better than anyone else the dynamics of social movements, they formulated policies that proved to be successful. Their chief rivals, the far more numerous Social Revolutionaries, were deficient in these qualities. “[W]hereas the agitation of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries was scattered, self-contradictory and oftenest of all evasive, the agitation of the Bolsheviks was distinguished by its concentrated and well thought-out character.”<sup>62</sup> Trotsky describes how, in one county, three or four Bolsheviks were sufficient to prevail over the much larger but relatively timid Social Revolutionary organization.<sup>63</sup> “The lack of correspondence between the technical resources of the Bolsheviks and their relative political weight [found] its expression in the small number of members of the party compared to the colossal growth of its influence.”<sup>64</sup>

Meanwhile, the “bourgeois-democratic” reformists (Kerensky et al.) were not even in the running, because they lacked unity and concentrated purpose and seem to have had no conception of what was and what was not possible in a time of passionate upheaval such as that which gripped Russia in 1917. As for the defenders of the old Tsarist order, to the extent that there were any left in Russia they were in total disarray and psychologically defeated. Consequently, the Bolsheviks were able to overwhelm all their adversaries and make themselves the dominant political force in Russia.

All this doesn’t necessarily mean that the Bolsheviks had the support—much less the active support—of a majority of Russians. The support of the peasants was shaky at best, and existed only when the Bolsheviks were (temporarily) giving them what they wanted.<sup>65</sup> But once the Bolsheviks had seized power in October<sup>66</sup> 1917, the only organized and effective resistance to them originated outside Russia with the

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<sup>62</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 306. Compare Ulam, p. 140 (the Bolsheviks were “a determined and disciplined party... at least in comparison with others...”), p. 143 (referring to “the bumbling behavior of the leaders of the... Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries ...”), p. 155 (referring to “the Mensheviks’ and Socialist Revolutionaries’ indecision and paralysis of will”).

<sup>63</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, p. 398.

<sup>64</sup> This refers to August and September 1917. Ibid., Vol. Two, p. 282.

<sup>65</sup> See NEB (2010), Vol. 22, “Lenin,” p. 936. Trotsky, Vol. Three, pp. 76, 88-123, 294, gives the impression that by October 1917 the Bolsheviks had won the support of the great majority of the Russian population, or at least of the peasants, the soldiers, and the proletariat. But Trotsky probably felt compelled for ideological reasons to portray the Bolsheviks as having the support of “the people.” It’s more likely that, even at the best of times, the Bolsheviks had the active support only of some smallish minority and the mere passive acquiescence of a larger number (possibly though not necessarily a majority), while most of those who feared or disliked the Bolsheviks were disorganized and intimidated, therefore ineffective.

<sup>66</sup> Actually November according to modern dating. Prior to the Revolution Russia used “Old Style” dates, i.e., dates according to the Julian Calendar, while most of the rest of the world was using the Gregorian Calendar, the calendar that is still in use today. In this book we haven’t bothered to distinguish between Old Style and New Style dates in Russian history, because the difference of some 13 days is of no importance for our purposes. Readers who want accurate dates can refer to any history of the Russian Revolution.



numerous emigres who opposed the revolution. These assembled counterrevolutionary armies and, supported by several foreign powers, invaded Russia with the intention of ousting the Bolsheviks. During the ensuing Civil War of 1918-1920: “The rate of desertions in the Red Army was unusually high: Trotsky instituted a veritable reign of terror to prevent defections, including placing in the rear of the troops machine-gun detachments with instructions to shoot retreating units.”<sup>67</sup> But obviously the Bolsheviks couldn’t have maintained their control over a disaffected majority without the loyal support of at least a substantial minority; those machine-gunners wouldn’t have been willing to shoot down their fellow soldiers on orders from Trotsky if they hadn’t been committed to the Bolshevik cause. The Bolsheviks moreover had their minority well organized and disciplined;<sup>68</sup> consequently they prevailed over the invaders, who were poorly organized.<sup>69</sup>

It’s important to notice that the crucial events of the Russian Revolution took place in St. Petersburg. This was true of the spontaneous insurrection of February 1917 and also of the Bolsheviks’ seizure of power the following October. Thus the Bolsheviks were able to concentrate their efforts on a single city; once they had won in St. Petersburg the rest of the country was relatively easy.<sup>70</sup> This shows how victory at the single most critical point can provide a basis for the assumption of power throughout an entire society—a further reason why it is possible for a numerically small revolutionary movement to prevail.

## Section 11

To summarize, the expected pattern for a revolution against the technological system will be something like the following:

A. A small movement, a cohesive cadre of committed, hard-core revolutionaries, will build its internal strength by developing its own organization and discipline. This movement should have branches in several of the world’s most important nations or groups of nations; say, the United States, China, Western Europe, and one or more of Russia, Latin America, and India. In each country, the movement will prepare the way for revolution by disseminating ideas—ideas that will be chosen for their soundness and not for their popularity. The movement will take pains to demonstrate the most uncompromising revolutionary integrity, and will strive to prove itself the most effective of all the factions opposed to the existing system.

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<sup>67</sup> NEB (2003), Vol. 28, “Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,” p. 1003.

<sup>68</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Three, p. 294.

<sup>69</sup> Ulam, pp. 178-79.

<sup>70</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, pp. 137-140; Vol. Two, p. 302 (“The Petrograd [St. Petersburg] Soviet [was] the parent of all the other soviets...”); Vol. Three generally, especially pp. 88-123. Ulam, p. 137. Stalin, History of the Communist Party, seventh chapter, Section 6, p. 286.

B. A large minority of the general population will recognize that the revolutionaries' ideas have some merit. But this minority **will** reject the revolutionaries' solutions, if only through reluctance to change familiar ways of living or as a result of cowardice or apathy.

C. Eventually there will arrive a crisis, or a failure of the system serious enough to enable the revolutionaries to create a crisis, in which it will no longer be possible to carry on with familiar ways of living, and in which the system's ability to provide for people's physical and psychological needs will be impaired to such an extent that most people will lose all respect for and all confidence in the existing social order, while many individuals will become desperate or angry. Their desperation and anger will soon degenerate into despair and apathy—unless the revolutionaries are able to step in at that point and inspire them with a sense of purpose, organize them, and channel their fear, desperation, and anger into practical action. Because these people will be desperate or angry and because they will have been energized by the revolutionaries, the risk to themselves, however great it may be, will not deter them from striving to bring down the system.

D. Even so, the revolutionary movement will probably be able to gain the active support only of some fairly small minority of the population. But the great majority will be either hopeless and apathetic or else motivated merely to save their own skins, so they will not act to defend the system.

E. The established authorities meanwhile will be disoriented, frightened, or discouraged, and therefore incapable of organizing an effective defense. Consequently, power will be in the hands of the revolutionaries.

F. By the time revolutionaries have taken power in one nation—for example, the United States—globalization will have proceeded even farther than it has today, and nations will be even more interdependent than they are now.<sup>71</sup> Consequently, when revolutionaries have brought the technological system to an abrupt halt in the United States, the economy of the entire world will be severely disrupted and the acute crisis that results will give the anti-tech revolutionaries of all nations the opportunity that they need.

G. It is extremely important to realize that when the moment for decisive action arrives (as at C, above) the revolutionaries must recognize it, and then must press forward without any hesitation, vacillation, doubts, or scruples to the achievement of their ultimate goal. Hesitation or vacillation would throw the movement into disarray and would confuse and discourage its members. (We will return to this point in a moment.)

The pattern we have just outlined is a very broad and general one that can accommodate a wide variety of routes to revolutionary success. Even so, given the unpredictability of historical events, it is impossible to know for certain whether the route that a revolutionary movement will actually take will fit within the pattern we've de-

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<sup>71</sup> See ISAIF, 1196.

scribed. But the pattern is an entirely plausible one, and it provides an answer to those who think the system is too big and strong ever to be overthrown. Moreover, the preparatory work that we have briefly indicated above, at A, will be appropriate for almost any route to revolution that a movement might take in reality.

## Section 12

Let's return to point G, above: that the revolutionaries must avoid all hesitation or vacillation when the moment for decisive action arrives. The leaders of the movement must be astute enough to recognize the arrival of that moment. Trotsky claims that in a revolutionary situation there is a particular interval of time, limited to a few weeks or at most a few months, during which a society is primed for insurrection. Any attempt to bring about an insurrection must be undertaken during that interval or the opportunity will be lost.<sup>72</sup> So says Trotsky, and we may accept that this is true as a general rule (though of course all such rules have exceptions). Trotsky was speaking only of insurrections, but it should be obvious that a similar rule applies to many other kinds of revolutionary actions: One can hope to carry them out successfully only when circumstances are favorable for them, and since circumstances change rapidly when a society is in crisis one must act at the right time; to act too soon or too late will lead to failure.

Here we are concerned mainly with the right moment to begin organizing on a mass basis for the final push toward the overthrow of the existing social order (as at C, above), a push that may or may not involve one or more insurrections but almost certainly will not consist merely of a single insurrection. The critical interval of time may be difficult to identify. "Lenin... greatly feared excessive caution, ... a letting slip of one of those historic occasions which are decades in preparation."<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, if the revolutionaries act prematurely they may suffer a disastrous defeat. Only an assiduous study of history and of revolutionary theory, with careful and thoughtful observation of current events, can develop the judgment necessary for recognition of the critical interval during which the push toward consummation of the revolution can be successfully initiated.

But let's assume that the revolutionaries have correctly noted the arrival of the time to begin organizing on a mass basis for the final push. Once that stage has been reached, certain guidelines need to be taken into consideration.

Alinsky maintains that the organizers of a mass movement must "act in terms of specific resolutions and answers, of definiteness and certainty. To do otherwise would be to stifle organization and action, for what the organizer accepts as uncertainty would be seen by [the people he is organizing] as a terrifying chaos."<sup>74</sup> Trotsky warns against

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<sup>72</sup> Trotsky, Vol.Three, pp. 173,284.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>74</sup> Alinsky, p. 107.

“indecisiveness”: “The party of revolution dare not waver—no more than a surgeon dare who has plunged a knife into a sick body.”<sup>75</sup> Here Trotsky refers to the final stage of a revolutionary process, when the existing social order is in a state of crisis and the revolutionaries are aiming directly at its overthrow. Throughout this stage there is a need to maintain **momentum**: Alinsky emphasizes that a mass movement has to remain constantly in action, avoid defeats, and keep its adversaries under unremitting pressure.<sup>76</sup> Trotsky says that a revolutionary process can continue only “so long as the swing of the movement does not run into objective obstacles. When it does, there begins a reaction: disappointments of the different layers of the revolutionary class, growth of indifferentism and therewith a strengthening of the position of the counter-revolutionary forces.”<sup>77</sup>

However, the rule that momentum should be maintained is not unqualified: Revolutionaries should not, for the sake of momentum, undertake a major action prematurely. In July 1917 the Bolsheviks intentionally aborted an insurrection in St. Petersburg because they judged that the time was not ripe for it. Their action temporarily checked the momentum of the revolutionary process and led to a severe setback for the Bolsheviks, but it averted the utterly disastrous setback that would have ensued if the insurrection had actually been attempted.<sup>78</sup> Nothing in this is inconsistent with the rule that revolutionaries must act decisively and without vacillation: The Bolsheviks did indeed act decisively to abort an insurrection that they had done nothing to instigate and that they knew was untimely.

Alinsky stresses the importance of avoiding moral ambiguity. The organizers of a mass movement need to delineate issues in black and white: Their own cause must be pure, noble, unequivocally good, while their adversaries represent nothing but evil.<sup>79</sup> All of the movement’s actions are automatically presumed to be fully justified, for any vacillation on moral or humanitarian grounds would be as fatal as vacillation on any other grounds. The fact that vacillation on moral or humanitarian grounds was likely to be fatal in any life-and-death conflict<sup>80</sup> was understood by some of our most admired statesmen and soldiers—those who led the Western democracies when they

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<sup>75</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, pp. 4, 7.

<sup>76</sup> Alinsky, pp. 77-78, 113-14, 120, 128-29.

<sup>77</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, pp. xviii-xix. See also *ibid.*, p. 110 (“A revolutionary uprising... can develop victoriously only in case it ascends step by step, and scores one success after another. A pause in its growth is dangerous; a prolonged marking of time, fatal.”). I can’t pretend to say under just what circumstances these dicta of Trotsky’s are actually valid, but there are numerous counterexamples to them unless the term “revolutionary uprising” is interpreted very narrowly. It remains true, however, that momentum is a very important factor in revolution, as it is in many other conflict situations.

<sup>78</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, pp. 9-31, 63, 68, 73, 82-83. Ulam, pp. 144-48, portrays the Bolsheviks’ action during the July Days as much more confused and less calculated.

<sup>79</sup> Alinsky, pp. 27-28, 78, 133-34. See also ISAIF, 1186.

<sup>80</sup> “In a serious struggle there is no worse cruelty than to be magnanimous at an inopportune time.” Trotsky, Vol. Three, p. 215.

were locked in struggles for survival. E.g., Lincoln and Grant during the U.S. Civil War, or Churchill and Roosevelt during World War II.

Similarly, it is a fatal error to delay action, or to act timidly, in order to avoid offending people. For example: The Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were the two revolutionary parties derived from the split in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. In the period immediately following the St. Petersburg insurrection of February 1917, Trotsky says, “the official Social Democratic program was still ... common to the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, [and] the practical tasks of the democratic revolution looked the same on paper to both parties.” But, while the Bolsheviks promptly undertook radical measures, the Mensheviks temporized in order to avoid antagonizing the bourgeoisie and the liberals.<sup>81</sup> In general, according to Trotsky, the behavior of the “Compromisers” (= Menshevik and Social Revolutionary leaders<sup>82</sup>) was “evasive.” “The Compromisers talked themselves out of difficulties; the Bolsheviks went to meet them.”<sup>83</sup> The Compromisers’ tactics would have been appropriate under normal circumstances in a functioning parliamentary democracy, but in a revolutionary situation those same tactics were sure losers. So of course it was the Bolsheviks who came out on top.

The remarks in the last four paragraphs are intended to provide general guidelines for hard-core revolutionaries to take into consideration in the process of acquiring and leading a mass following when the system moves into a state of crisis; it is the volatile mass that will be incapable of tolerating uncertainty, moral ambiguity, defeats, or periods of inactivity. During the earlier stages of the movement’s life, while it is diligently and patiently preparing the way for revolution, the hard-core revolutionaries, the committed cadre, will have to be able to endure—up to a point—the uncertainties that will inevitably arise, as well as the long periods without spectacular activity and the tactical defeats that will occur. But once the revolutionary process has arrived at its final stage—the time of crisis during which the revolutionaries are pushing directly toward the overthrow of the system—the committed cadre must strive to eliminate even within its own ranks all uncertainties, hesitations, vacillations, doubts, and scruples. For one thing, such internal vacillations would inevitably be communicated to the revolutionaries’ mass following. For another, at this critical time it will be especially important for the committed cadre to be capable of prompt, decisive, unified action, and such action will be rendered impossible by vacillations or disagreements within the cadre. If vacillations or disagreements are long continued, even the most deeply committed revolutionaries may lose heart.

In practice, of course, vacillations and disagreements will probably arise among the revolutionary leaders even during the final push toward overthrow of the system. The revolutionaries will need to resolve these conflicts quickly and completely, so that they

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., Vol. One, pp. 323-24.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., VolTwo, p.453.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.306.

can show unity in action and provide their mass following with consistent, unambiguous, decisive leadership. “The high temper of the Bolshevik party expressed itself not in an absence of disagreements, waverings, and even quakings, but in the fact that in the most difficult circumstances it gathered itself in good season by means of inner crises, and made good its opportunity to interfere decisively in the course of events.”<sup>84</sup>

As always, the reader must remember that in the real world events are unpredictable. The preceding paragraphs provide only general guidelines, not rigid rules that can be applied mechanically. The guidelines may have to be modified to adapt them to the concrete situations that will arise in the practice of revolutionary politics.

## Section 13

One possible cause of hesitation on the part of revolutionaries needs to be addressed. Some time ago this writer received a letter from an individual who asked whether revolutionaries should strive to bring about the collapse of the technological system even though the chaos attendant on the collapse would entail an increased risk of nuclear war. The answer is that revolutionaries should not be deterred by such a risk.

First, the proliferation of nuclear weapons to unstable or irresponsible countries (such as Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran) continues and is unlikely to be permanently halted.<sup>85</sup> Consequently, the risk of nuclear war can only increase as long as the technological system survives, and the sooner the system collapses the less will be the risk of nuclear war in the long run.

Second, though many people assume that a major nuclear war would result in the extinction of the human race and of most species of mammals, that assumption is probably incorrect. Undoubtedly the consequences of such a war would be horrible, but serious students of these matters do not believe that most species of mammals would be completely wiped out or that the human race would disappear.<sup>86</sup>

Third, if nothing intervenes to prevent the technological system from proceeding to its logical conclusion, there is every reason to believe that the eventual result will be a planet uninhabitable for all of the more complex forms of life as we know them today. See Chapter Two, Part IV So if we had to choose between a major nuclear war and the continued existence of the system, we would have to take nuclear war as the lesser evil.

Fourth, if we allow the defenders of the system to deter us with the threat of nuclear war or of any other dire consequences, then we may as well give up. A revolutionary movement can't be successful if it allows its pursuit of its objective to be limited by reservations or qualifications of any kind, for these can only lead to fatal hesitation

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Vol. Three, p.166.

<sup>85</sup> See note 26 to Chapter One.

<sup>86</sup> Nissani, Chapt. 2, especially pp. 62-69. NEB (2003), Vol. 8, “nuclear winter,”p. 821. Shukman, pp. 44-45. G.Johnson, pp. 126, 128-29.

at critical times. Revolutionaries must take their goal to be the collapse of the system no matter what. You have to make a decision: Is the elimination of the technological system worth all of the desperate risks and terrifying disasters that it will entail? If you don't have the courage to answer "yes" to that question, then you'd better quit whining about the evils and hardships of the modern world and just adapt yourself to them as best you can, because nothing short of the collapse of the system will ever get us off the road that we are on now.

## Section 14

In sections 12 and 13 we've offered some guidelines for revolutionary action to be taken upon the arrival of an acute crisis of the system. Remaining to be discussed is the long preparatory period during which the movement builds its strength for the final push toward revolution.

In a revolutionary situation—as we've pointed out already in section 1—victory is determined not primarily by numbers but by the dynamics of social movements. In section 10 we've seen examples of numerically tiny movements that have initiated successful revolutions. A small but well-organized,<sup>87</sup> unified, and deeply committed movement will have a far better chance of success than will a vastly larger movement that lacks these characteristics. In other words, quality is more important than quantity.<sup>88</sup> Consequently, while an organization is building its strength for a future revolution, it must strictly subordinate the goal of increasing its numbers to that of recruiting high-quality people who are capable of total commitment to the cause. Their commitment must be exclusive; they must have no competing loyalty to any other cause. Because the membership of the revolutionary organization has to be limited, as far as possible, to people of this type, selectiveness in recruitment is essential.<sup>89</sup>

## Section 15

If the goal of revolutionaries is the complete elimination of the technological society, then they must discard the values and the morality of that society and replace them with new values and a new morality designed to serve the purposes of revolution.<sup>90</sup> Trotsky put it this way:

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<sup>87</sup> See Rule (iii) of Chapter Three; Alinsky, p. 113 ("power comes from organization... Power and organization are one and the same.").

<sup>88</sup> This is essentially what the dispute between Lenin and Martov was about. Selznick, p. 57&n43. Stalin, *History of the Communist Party*, second chapter, Section 3, pp. 60-61. Ulam, p. 52&n5, maintains that Lenin's dispute with Martov over control of the party journal, *Iskra*, was far more important, but what matters for our purposes is that Lenin proved to be right about the composition of the party.

<sup>89</sup> See the discussion of Rule (iv) in Chapter Three, Part III.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Smelser, pp. 120-22, 313-325.

Bolshevism created the type of the authentic revolutionist who subordinates [his ideas and his moral judgments] to historic goals irreconcilable with contemporary society... . [T]he Bolshevik party created not only a political but a moral medium of its own, independent of bourgeois social opinion and implacably opposed to it. Only this permitted the Bolsheviks to overcome the waverings in their own ranks and reveal in action that courageous determination without which the October [Revolution] would have been impossible.<sup>91</sup>

Suitable recruits to the revolutionary movement will include only those who are prepared to abandon the old values and morality and adopt in their place the revolutionary values and morality. The revolutionary message needs to be addressed to and designed for, not the general public, but the small minority of people who have the potential to become committed members of the revolutionary organization.

## Section 16

It follows that the revolutionaries should never retreat from their extreme positions for the sake of popularity or to avoid offending the moral or other sensibilities of the general public.<sup>92</sup> If the revolutionary organization were to dilute its message or prevaricate in order to avoid offending people it would discourage its own members and lose their respect, weakening their commitment to the organization; it would lose the respect of the best kind of potential recruits while attracting many who were incapable of total commitment to the organization; and it would lose the respect of the general public. A revolutionary organization should seek not to be liked, but to be respected, and it should have no aversion to being hated and feared. Mao regarded hatred of a revolutionary organization as a sign that it was effective.<sup>93</sup> It is to such an organization that many people will turn in a time of crisis when they have lost all confidence in the existing social order and are desperate or angry.

## Section 17

Revolutionaries will not suddenly become effective agitators, propagandists, organizers and leaders at the moment when the system reaches a crisis. They will need to begin developing these abilities through practical experience long before the crisis arrives. In order to acquire such experience, revolutionaries will have to involve themselves in political efforts that are peripheral to the central issue of technology. For

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<sup>91</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Three, p. 166.

<sup>92</sup> See Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 311 ("strength is accumulated in struggle and not in passive evasion of it").

<sup>93</sup> Mao, p. 161. Hitler would have agreed. See Hoffer, § 73.



example, an anti-tech organization might join with other groups in addressing some environmental issue of special importance—though it will be necessary for the revolutionaries to make very clear that the environmental issue is a sideshow and that the long-term goal must be to eliminate the entire technological system.

In all such activities the revolutionary organization should strive to prove itself more determined and more effective than the other groups involved, for when a crisis arrives the organization will more readily acquire a mass following if it has already demonstrated its superior effectiveness. “[I]n the course of struggle ... broad masses must learn from experience that we fight better than the others, that we see more clearly than the others, that we are more audacious and resolute.”<sup>94</sup>

Another way revolutionaries can acquire practical experience will be through the publication of a newspaper or journal devoted to anti-tech work. Lenin wrote:

A paper is not merely a collective propagandist and collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer... With the aid of, and around a paper, there will automatically develop an organization that will be concerned, not only with local activities, but also with regular, general work; it will teach its members carefully to watch political events, to estimate their importance and their influence on the various sections of the population, and to devise suitable methods to influence these events through the revolutionary party. The mere technical problem of procuring a regular supply of material for the newspaper and its regular distribution will make it necessary to create a network of agents... who will be in close contact with each other. ...<sup>95</sup>

Nowadays, of course, a newspaper or journal will likely be published not only in print but also on the Internet; or perhaps even on the Internet alone.

## Section 18

In order to be effective, a revolutionary organization must be capable of unity in action. As Fidel Castro put it: “No one can expect anything useful from an organization comprised of anarchic men who, at the first disagreement, seek their own road, breaking and destroying the machine.” Consequently, Castro put great importance on discipline.<sup>96</sup>

Stalin stressed the need for “unity of will” and “absolute and complete unity of action on the part of all members of the Party.” He set forth an admirable theory:

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<sup>94</sup> Selznick, p. 132, quoting from a Communist document.

<sup>95</sup> Selznick, p. 49, quoting Lenin, “Where to Begin,” in *Collected Works*, 1929 edition, Vol. 4, Book I, p. 114.

<sup>96</sup> Fidel Castro, letter of Aug. 14, 1954, in Conte Aguero; quoted in Horowitz, pp. 62-63.

[Unity] does not mean of course that there will never be any conflict of opinion within the Party. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes criticism and conflicts of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that this discipline must be 'blind' discipline. On the contrary iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after a discussion has been closed, after criticism has run its course and a decision has been made, unity of will and unity of action become indispensable conditions without which Party unity and iron discipline in the Party are inconceivable.<sup>97</sup>

Needless to say, Stalin was concerned above all to maintain his own power, and consequently he never allowed the democratic aspect of the foregoing theory to be put into practice. But this need not prevent us from recognizing that the theory itself—that decisions are to be arrived at with free discussion and criticism throughout the organization, after which all members will be expected to obey the decisions that have been made whether or not they personally agree with them—is an excellent one for a revolutionary organization to follow.

Nelson Mandela would have agreed with Stalin's theory (though not, of course, with Stalin's practice), for he "believed passionately in democracy" within the African National Congress,<sup>98</sup> yet insisted on party discipline: Once a decision had been made by the organization, all members had to comply with it. "Having subjugated his own will to the movement, he was determined that others should do so too."<sup>99</sup>

But it has to be conceded that in practical terms the theory is not as democratic as it sounds. First, many decisions will need to be made quickly, with no time for discussion by the rank and file. The organization will have to have some sort of executive body that is empowered to make such decisions, and the rank and file will have to obey the decisions so made. Second, even when there is sufficient time, the organization can't be effective if many decisions are made by a simple head-count, so many votes on one side, so many on the other. However offensive it may be to our democratic sensibilities, the plain truth is that some individuals will have vastly more knowledge and experience relevant to the functioning of the organization than others will. Every member of the organization should be listened to, but the main responsibility for decision-making will have to rest with a relatively small group of leaders<sup>100</sup> comprising those members who are best informed and have the highest level of political and organizational skill. Thus,

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<sup>97</sup> Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, pp. 116-17, quoted by Selznick, p. 35.

<sup>98</sup> Sampson, p.427.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50. See also pp. 403, 427 (Mandela always regarded himself as a "loyal and disciplined member" of the ANC).

<sup>100</sup> In Chapter One, Part III, we've called attention to the fact that the formally empowered leaders of an entire nation have in reality only limited power over the functioning of their society, and of course the leaders of any organization face a similar problem to a greater or lesser degree. So the question arises of the extent to which the leaders of an anti-tech organization will actually be able to control it. I

an effective revolutionary organization will require a significant measure of hierarchy and discipline.<sup>101</sup>

The so-called “democratic” countries in today’s world are in reality governed by political parties. In even the most democratic of these parties, decisions are made primarily by a limited inner circle of leaders<sup>102</sup> who pay only as much attention as they think expedient to the opinions of the rank and file. A close approximation to true democracy can exist only in societies organized on a very small scale, such as the nomadic bands of African pygmies.<sup>103</sup> In any modern, large-scale society, a political organization that attempts to maintain a truly democratic internal structure will condemn itself to impotence.

## Section 19

Recognition of the importance of unity might lead to an erroneous conclusion, namely, that a revolutionary organization should never split when there are disagreements over principles, strategy, or tactics. Of course, a faction shouldn’t split from its parent organization for slight reasons or while there is a good prospect of resolving disagreements through discussion, or when there is an acute, immediate need to present a united front against adversaries. But an organization cannot be truly unified when there is within it a persistent, irreconcilable disagreement over a question

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won’t attempt a serious discussion of this difficult subject, but will merely point out that the problem of control is far less acute in the case of our revolutionary organization than it is in the case of an entire nation or even of an entity such as a large corporation. To mention only one reason, the revolutionary organization will be to a great extent ideologically uniform because its members are to be recruited selectively (see section 14, above), troublesome members will be relatively easy to identify and expel, and any dissident faction that may develop should withdraw to form a separate organization (see section 19). This will tend strongly to reduce the conflict of individual wills within the organization.

Later, when the revolutionaries assume leadership of a mass movement, the problem of control may indeed be acute. (Recall for example the case of the “July Days”—mentioned above, section 12—in which the Bolsheviks were able to prevent an untimely insurrection only at very great cost to themselves. See Trotsky, Vol. Two, pp. 1-84, 250-58.) On the other hand, even at this stage, the fact of being locked in a hard struggle against external adversaries will tend to unite the movement behind its leaders, and this will facilitate control.

In well-organized revolutionary movements such as those of the Bolsheviks and the Nazis, the core of the movement (though not necessarily the mass following) seems to have remained, generally speaking, well under the control of the leaders prior to the time when the movement came into power. But once the movement had assumed the government of an entire nation, grave problems of control did emerge. See Chapter One, Part III; Chapter Three, *passim*.

<sup>101</sup> “[N]o revolutionary organization has ever practiced broad democracy, nor could it, however much it desired to do so.” Lenin, “What Is to Be Done?,” Chapt. IV, Part E; in Christman, p. 161; and see the example of the British trade unions on the succeeding pages.

<sup>102</sup> See Selznick, pp. 96-97 & 17, 288 & 15.

<sup>103</sup> See Schebesta, II. Band, I. Teil, p. 8; Turnbull, *Forest People*, pp. 110, 125, and Wayward Servants, pp. 27, 28, 42, 178-181, 183, 187, 228, 256, 274, 294, 300.

of far-reaching importance. If such a disagreement develops among the members of a revolutionary organization, and if there is no apparent likelihood of resolving the disagreement within a reasonable time, it will usually be best if the dissident minority separates itself from the parent group. This will leave the parent group and the minority each with its own independent unity. If the minority is wrong it presumably will remain weak, while the parent group leads the revolution. On the other hand, if the minority's view is proven right through practice, then the minority can be expected to assume leadership when the time is ripe and leave its parent organization in the dust.

Lenin said, "We must not be afraid to be a minority,"<sup>104</sup> and he never hesitated to act accordingly when he was sure he was right. Trotsky makes clear that Lenin always insisted on pursuing his own line no matter what the rest of the Bolsheviks thought. Lenin preferred to be a member of a small minority that was right rather than compromise his views in order to get broader support.<sup>105</sup> Thus he and his Bolsheviks, though they constituted a minority within the Social Democratic Party, split from their rivals, the Mensheviks (effectively in 1903, formally in 1912) and took their own road.<sup>106</sup> Because their road turned out to be the right one, they eventually prevailed over the Mensheviks.

Again, at the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Lenin adopted and maintained an anti-war position and even advocated "transforming the imperialist war into civil war," despite the fact that he was supported in this only by his "closest comrades," who comprised "a minority within the group of anti-war Socialists, who, in turn, constituted a small minority of the international Socialist movement...".<sup>107</sup> Lenin and his minority prevailed in the end because their judgment of the political situation had been better than that of other socialists.

When Lenin announced his "April Theses" in the spring of 1917 these were met with hostility by the other Bolshevik leaders, who thought he was "temporarily disorientated."<sup>108</sup> Lenin persisted, however, and in this case he did succeed after several weeks in bringing the rest of the party over to his view.<sup>109</sup> Much the same thing happened in October of that year when, at first against the opposition of the majority of

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<sup>104</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 306.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., Vol. One, pp. 306-313.

<sup>106</sup> NEB (2010), Vol. 22, "Lenin," pp. 933-34. Though the name "Menshevik" (from "menshe" = "smaller") implies minority status and "Bolshevik" (from "bolshe" = "bigger") implies that the Bolsheviks were a majority, the Bolsheviks were in fact a minority. Ibid., p. 933. Christman, editor's introduction, p. 6. See also Ulam, p. 50, and Lenin, "The State and Revolution," Chapt. IV, section 6; in Christman, p. 332.

<sup>107</sup> NEB (2010), Vol. 22, "Lenin," p. 934. Here it is stated that "not a few Bolsheviks supported the war effort." Hence, the "closest comrades" who followed Lenin on this issue at first comprised only some subset of the Bolsheviks. See Ulam, pp. 126-28.

<sup>108</sup> NEB (2010), Vol. 22, "Lenin," p. 935.

<sup>109</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, pp. 298-312.

the Bolshevik leaders but eventually with success, Lenin advocated the insurrection that put the Bolsheviks in control of Russia.<sup>110</sup>

Lenin won out in these conflicts only because his political judgment was better than that of his opponents. If his opponents had advocated more effective policies, they would have prevailed in the end and Lenin would have sunk into obscurity.

Lenin of course was a political genius, so he could afford to be confident to the point of arrogance in his political judgments. Those of us who are not equally gifted should be more cautious about risking a split in a revolutionary movement. Nevertheless, when it has become clear that there are deep and irreconcilable disagreements between different factions, it will generally be advisable for a movement to split.

## Section 20

A revolutionary movement needs to be self-confident. Alinsky, in explaining the techniques he had used throughout his long and successful career as a social and political activist, emphasized that a community organizer had to have confidence in himself<sup>111</sup> and had to instill confidence in the people he was organizing. As long as people lacked confidence in their own power to bring about great changes they remained passive and apathetic, but once they were imbued with a sense of their own power they could become energetic, active, and effective.<sup>112</sup> Trotsky noted the significance of the fact that the Bolsheviks “believed in their own truth and their victory.”<sup>113</sup> The international communist movement—successor to the Bolsheviks—placed importance on “belief in the triumph of our cause.”<sup>114</sup>

When Fidel Castro claimed that he could start a revolution with ten or fifteen men (see above, section 10), he added an important condition: His men had to have “absolute faith,” presumably meaning absolute faith in their own eventual victory. The term “absolute faith” must be taken with a grain of salt. Given Marxism’s claim to be “scientific” and the enormous prestige of science, it’s not surprising that many Marxists of the 19th and the early 20th century had absolute faith in the eventual victory of the proletarian revolution. But nowadays well-informed people are more sophisticated, more skeptical. If you try to tell them that your movement is absolutely certain to

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., Vol. Three, pp. 124-166.

<sup>111</sup> Alinsky, pp. 60, 79.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., pp. 19, 105-06, 113-14, 117-19, 178, 194.

<sup>113</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Three, p. 73.

<sup>114</sup> Selznick, p. 39 (quoting Dimitrov, p. 124). After the revolution the Bolsheviks changed their name to “Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).” Selznick, p. 10n3, says the name was changed in 1919, but this is an error. Ulam, p. 168<sup>8</sup>, Stalin, *History of the Communist Party*, seventh chapter, Section 7, p. 299, and other sources agree that the name was changed in 1918. Later there were further changes of name, Ulam, pp. 703-04, 732, but all of the new names contained the phrase “Communist Party.” Accordingly, we here use the term “Communist” to refer to the post-1918 Bolsheviks, their adherents, and their successors.

achieve victory, you will attract only those who are either thoroughly irrational or extraordinarily naive.

Castro, however, in speaking of “absolute faith,” may have been referring not to a literal belief in the certainty of victory but to a psychological state: to buoyant self-confidence and a subjective sense of power—qualities that encourage people to exert themselves to the limit, to recover from repeated defeats, and to persist in the face of difficulties that less inspired individuals would see as insurmountable. This psychological state does not require an absolute certainty of success, but it does at least require a belief that one will have an excellent chance of success if only one works hard enough and long enough and shows sufficient energy, courage, willpower, skill, and determination.

Such a belief can be rationally sustained. Self-confidence tends to be self-justifying, in the sense that confidence that one can succeed tends to lead to **actual** success. A chief determinant, if not **the** chief determinant, of success for a revolutionary movement is its faith in itself. Faith leads to deep commitment; it inspires heroic efforts and persistence in the face of overwhelming difficulties. Given such faith and commitment, a movement may achieve things that no one thought possible. Above, section 10, we’ve given examples of tiny groups of seeming “cranks” who initiated successful revolutions against what appeared at the outset to be impossible odds. Numerous examples can be cited—we will cite some in a moment—of groups that eventually achieved victory only because they had the self-confidence to persist in the face of defeat and even when their situation seemed hopeless.

Conversely, when people lack confidence in their power to achieve things they will not in fact achieve anything difficult, because no one will exert himself to the limit when he has little hope that his efforts will be rewarded with any impressive result. For the same reason it is a serious mistake to set modest goals for a revolutionary movement on the ground that such goals are “realistic.” Only a truly world-transforming goal can inspire people to accept hardship, risk, and sacrifice, and to put forth the extreme effort that will be necessary for the success of any real revolutionary movement in the world today.<sup>115</sup>

It follows that the goal a revolutionary movement sets itself must be nothing less than the total collapse of the technological system. The movement moreover must consistently insist that its chances of achieving that goal will be excellent if its members show a sufficient level of commitment, energy, courage, willpower, skill, and persistence.

## Section 21

An important note of clarification: The rule that a revolutionary movement should be self-confident refers to confidence in its ability to reach its ultimate goal—that of

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<sup>115</sup> C£ ISAIF, 1141.

consummating the revolution. Overconfidence in carrying out particular projects or operations must be carefully guarded against, because overconfidence leads to carelessness and carelessness leads to failure. That's why Lenin habitually exaggerated the potential risks involved in any action and worked out his plans with meticulous care.<sup>116</sup> As Trotsky said, "one must be prudent to win the right to be bold."<sup>117</sup>

Prudence demands that one take care not to underestimate one's adversary. Underestimation of the adversary leads to overconfidence, thence to carelessness and defeat. In general, it is safer to overestimate one's adversary.. Such was the policy of Lenin?<sup>118</sup> Mao emphasized that while one must have confidence in ones ability to defeat the enemy in the long run, one must never slacken one's efforts through overconfidence during the actual process of struggle:

Comrade Mao Tsetung has repeatedly pointed out: strategically, with regard to the whole, revolutionaries must despise the enemy, dare to struggle against him and dare to seize victory; at the same time, tactically, with reggard to each part, each specific struggle, they must take the enemy seriously, be prudent, carefully study and perfect the art of struggle... .<sup>119</sup>

In line with this, it should be understood that the rule that a revolutionary movement must have an ambitious, world-transforming goal refers only to the movement's ultimate goal. The movement's subsidiary goals—the goals that are steps on the way to the ultimate goal—should be prudently and carefully selected. Mao advised, "fight no battle you are not sure of winning;?"<sup>120</sup> Mao apparently was thinking primarily of a military situation, but whether in a military or in any other situation, his advice would be impractical if taken in a strictly literal sense. Seldom can one be really sure of success in any enterprise. However, in contemplating any project or action, revolutionaries should cautiously balance the advantages to be gained through success against the risk of defeat. Trotsky pointed out:: "Every defeat:... changes [the correlation of forces]... to the disadvantage of the vanquished, for the victor gains in self-confidence and the vanquished loses faith in himself."<sup>121</sup>

The hard core of a revolutionary movement needs to have the confidence, the commitment, and the psychological toughness to recover from repeated defeats and carry on in spite of them. But even the most deeply committed revolutionaries are, after all, human, and may be weakened by defeats or failures. Therefore one should risk a defeat or a failure only when there is a strong reason for doing so.

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<sup>116</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, p. 294; Vol. Two, pp. 310-11; Vol. Three, p. 127, Appendix One, p. 376.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., Vol. Two, p. 312.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., Vol. Two, p. 320; Vol. Three, pp. 127-28.

<sup>119</sup> Mao, p. 346 (editors' note at the foot of the page).

<sup>120</sup> Mao, p. 397. See also p. 189.

<sup>121</sup> Trotsky, Vol. Two, p. 251. See also Alinskyp. 114.

## Section 22

The negative effect of defeats will be mitigated if revolutionaries understand that, following a crushing defeat that seems to leave a group in a hopeless situation, a determined renewal of effort by whatever is left of the group very often leads to victory.

In a surprise attack at midwinter, 877-78, Danish Vikings seized control of Wessex, the country of the West Saxons. Believing that resistance was futile, the Saxons submitted to the invaders, but their king, Alfred, escaped with a few followers to the woods and moors of Somerset, and by Easter 878 he had established himself in a fort on an island in the Somerset marshes. At some point, either before or after reaching the marshes, Alfred collected a small army, and from the fort his men harassed the Danes with guerrilla attacks. About the middle of May Alfred summoned Saxon warriors from neighboring parts of Wessex and marched with them against the Danes, whom he defeated decisively at the Battle of Edington.<sup>122</sup> Alfred's "memory lived on through the Middle Ages and in legend as that of a king who won victory in apparently hopeless circumstances."<sup>123</sup>

Even more impressive is the case of Robert Bruce.<sup>124</sup> Toward the end of the 13th century, Edward I of England occupied Scotland and made it into something like an English colony. The Scots were restive under English rule, and in 1306 Robert Bruce, whose ancestry gave him a claim to the kingship, had himself inaugurated as King of Scotland. But within three months he was defeated in battle by the forces of Edward I and became a hunted fugitive, forced at times to survive under conditions of the greatest hardship.<sup>125</sup> At this stage his cause seemed hopeless. He had hardly any money or troops,<sup>126</sup> and the weakness of his position was "almost ludicrous."<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, over the succeeding years Bruce waged a savage guerrilla campaign, gradually increasing the territory he controlled and the number of his followers until, in 1314, he defeated the English decisively at the Battle of Bannockburn. After that he reigned in effect as King of Scotland, though he did not secure English recognition of Scotland's independence until 1328. Bruce's rise from a hunted fugitive to ruler of an independent kingdom is seen by some as incredible,<sup>128</sup> but it does not look incredible to those who have noticed how often in history seemingly lost causes have eventually triumphed.

In the autumn of 1878, the Social Democratic movement in Germany was very nearly destroyed by the Socialist Law of October 19 of that year', which was enforced with

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<sup>122</sup> This cursory account has been pieced together from two sources that are not perfectly consistent with one another: Kendrick, pp. 237-39 and MacFadyen, Chaps. IV, V.

<sup>123</sup> NEB (2003), Vol. 1, "Alfred," p. 260.

<sup>124</sup> For the whole story see Barrow, Duncan, and NEB (2003), Vol. 29, "United Kingdom," pp. 40-41, 120. John Barbour's poem is by no means accurate historically, but the editor, Duncan, provides copious notes in which he tries to sort out fact from legend.

<sup>125</sup> Barrow, pp. 154, 160-61, 164, 166-171. Barbour, Books 2, 3, in Duncan.

<sup>126</sup> Barrow, p. 166.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p. 165.



extreme severity and had the effect of abolishing any “societies with ‘social-democratic, socialistic, or communist’ tendencies.”<sup>129</sup> “As their foes were encouraged, many of the Social Democrats lost heart... [T]he movement nearly disintegrated completely.”<sup>130</sup> But within a year some of the tougher and more persistent Social Democrats were publishing a paper in Switzerland and devising ways of smuggling it into Germany.<sup>131</sup> Meanwhile, other members of the movement developed legal and illegal subterfuges that enabled them to circumvent the Socialist Law and build a new organization for the party,<sup>132</sup> so that by the autumn of 1884 German Social Democracy was stronger than ever<sup>133</sup>—even though it was still illegal.

According to Mao, “in 1931... some comrades became proud and overweening. The result was [a] ... serious error in the political line, which cost us about 90 percent of the revolutionary forces that we had built up with so much toil.”<sup>134</sup> An editors’ note explains:

The erroneous ‘Left’ line dominated the Party for a particularly long time (four years) and brought extremely heavy losses, with disastrous consequences, to the Party and the revolution. A loss of 90 percent was inflicted on the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese Red Army and its base areas... .<sup>135</sup>

But the Communists persisted in their efforts, rebounded from their defeats and, as we know, by 1949 had made themselves masters of China.

In South Africa during the early 1970s the ANC (African National Congress) seemed thoroughly defeated and almost defunct.<sup>136</sup> But what was left of the organization continued the struggle, with the result that the ANC eventually recovered its strength, made itself the dominant political force in South Africa, and subsequently became the ruling party of that country.

The Bolsheviks repeatedly recovered from severe defeats. When the Social Democrats of Russia (who included the Bolsheviks<sup>137</sup>) “helped to rouse antigovernment demonstrations” in 1905, their insurrection failed, and “they were arrested, imprisoned, or exiled.”<sup>138</sup> To one who lived through those days it seemed that “[t]he revolution was dying ... Darkness and despair had set in [among the intelligentsia].”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Lidtke, pp. 77-81.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-97.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., pp. 97-104.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 185. Compare the figures on this page with those on p. 74.

<sup>134</sup> Mao, p. 307.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 309n6 and pp. 177-78n3.

<sup>136</sup> Sampson, p. 259.

<sup>137</sup> See Selznick, p. 10n3, pp. 103-04; NEB (2010), Vol. 22, “Lenin” pp. 933-34.

<sup>138</sup> Gilbert, *European Powers*, p. 25.

<sup>139</sup> Radzinsky, p. 90 (quoting an old witness who had lived through the events).

“But Lenin did not despair of success. ... For him there were lessons to be learned, new plans to be worked out, alternate methods of revolution to be considered.”<sup>140</sup>

Again in 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, “the revolutionary movement died down... The revolutionary ideas were barely kept glowing in small and hushed circles. In the factories in those days nobody dared to call himself ‘Bolshevik’ for fear not only of arrest, but of a beating from the backward workers.”<sup>141</sup> As we mentioned earlier (section 10), the Bolsheviks’ centralized organization was destroyed at this time through the arrest of their delegates in the Duma. Nevertheless the Bolsheviks persisted, and following the February 1917 insurrection and the implementation of Lenin’s “April Theses” they made themselves into an important force in the Russian revolutionary process.

However, as a result of the “July Days” (the abortive insurrection of July 1917;<sup>142</sup> see section 12, above) the Bolsheviks again suffered a severe setback,<sup>143</sup> one that would have been fatal to a less determined group.

‘After the July Days,’ writes V. Yakovleva, at that time a member of the Central Committee ..., ‘all reports from the localities described with one voice not only a sharp decline in the mood of the masses, but even a definite hostility to our party. In a good number of cases our speakers were beaten up. The membership fell off rapidly, and several organizations ... even ceased to exist entirely.’ ... The efflux from the party in some cases reached such a scale that only after a new registration of members could the organization begin to live a proper life.<sup>144</sup>

We’ve emphasized that any major defeat is dangerous. But if a revolutionary organization has a hard core that is absolutely committed and determined, the organization in **some** cases may actually be strengthened by a defeat because its weaker members are weeded out: If they don’t leave the organization, they at least reveal themselves by their wavering during the period of failures and difficulties. Thus the hard core is consolidated, because its members are clearly distinguished from the weaker members of the organization. Trotsky notes in reference to the July Days:

This sharp turn in the mood of the masses produced an automatic, and moreover an unerring, selection within the cadres of the party. Those [Bolsheviks] who did not tremble in those days could be relied on absolutely in what was to come. They constituted a nucleus in the shops, in the factories, in the districts. On the eve of [the Bolshevik seizure of power in October

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<sup>140</sup> Gilbert, loc. cit.

<sup>141</sup> Trotsky, Vol. One, pp. 36-37.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., Vol. Two, pp. 1-84.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 250-58.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

1917], in making appointments and allotting tasks, the organizers would glance round many a time calling to mind who bore himself how in the July Days.<sup>145</sup>

In this way the Bolsheviks drew an advantage from their July defeat when the time came for them to take control of Russia. But just a few months after their seizure of power they again came close to total defeat with the invasion of the “White” counter-revolutionaries and their Western allies:

[T]he Bolsheviks were about to fall. It seemed a matter of days. Ruin surrounded them, from the Pacific and all across Siberia and the Urals, their power had collapsed. The Germans were in charge in the Ukraine, where a voluntary army was forming against the Bolsheviks, and the English were landing in the north. As was famine.<sup>146</sup>

In these circumstances, nothing but the unbreakable determination of the hard core of the Bolshevik Party enabled it to survive. But it did survive, and it retained its iron grip on Russia for more than sixty years thereafter.

This ability to bounce back from severe defeats is a trait that seems characteristic of successful revolutionary leaders. The trait is delineated with particular clarity in the case of Fidel Castro. Matthews emphasizes “Fidel’s incorrigible optimism and fighting spirit”<sup>147</sup>:

‘The most important feature of Fidel’s character,’ his brother Raul said to me ..., ‘is that he will not accept defeat.’

Every phase of his life, from childhood to the present, proves this point. ... Fidel never gave up; he never lost heart; he seems immune to discouragement and dismay..<sup>148</sup>

Fidel Castro was like Lenin in having the gift of inspiring all those around him by his faith in himself and in what he was doing. ... [I]t showed up best in the worst and apparently most hopeless periods?<sup>149</sup>

## Section 23

In these pages we may seem to be making heroes of such men as Robert Bruce, Lenin, Mao, Castro, the extreme Irish nationalists, and so forth. Certainly the deeds

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

<sup>146</sup> Radzinsky, p. 324.

<sup>147</sup> Matthews, p. 95.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., pp. 96-97.

of all these people were of heroic magnitude. But this doesn't mean that we should admire them as human beings, still less that we should respect their goals or their values. The Bolshevik Communist leaders were committed technophiles,<sup>150</sup> and therefore the adversaries of those of us who believe that modern technology is pushing the world toward disaster. Robert Bruce may (or may not) have made some pretense of patriotic motives,<sup>151</sup> but in all probability his real motive was personal ambition<sup>152</sup>—he wanted to be king of Scotland—and in the service of that ambition he inflicted terrible cruelties not only on the English but even on some of his fellow Scotsmen.<sup>153</sup> In the twentieth century, as we pointed out in Chapter Three, there was no reason why Ireland needed to become independent of Britain.<sup>154</sup> It was solely in order to satisfy their own psychological needs that the Irish nationalists provoked the war of independence that brought suffering and death to so many of their countrymen, and the Irish are no better off today than they would have been if Ireland had remained part of the United Kingdom.

Here we've taken notice of some of the revolutionaries of the past only because we can learn something from their experience and their methods. If we've cited Communist leaders more often than others, we've done so not from any sympathy for Communism but only because the Communists, by and large, have been the most effective and successful revolutionaries of the 20th century.

## Section 24

Professional propagandists know that people usually accept only those new ideas that they are already predisposed to accept.<sup>155</sup> A revolutionary movement should try to identify the sectors of the population whose members are most likely to be predisposed to accept the revolutionary message, and should give special attention to those sectors in propagating its ideas and in its efforts at recruitment. Nevertheless, anti-tech ideas should be made known not only to the predisposed sectors but to the population at large. The rule that only predisposed people accept new ideas is not necessarily applicable “in times of revolutionary crisis when old beliefs have been shattered.”<sup>156</sup> Thus, as we pointed out in section 8, when a severe crisis of the system arrives the revolutionary movement will have its opportunity to acquire a mass following; but a mass following will be more easily acquired if most people already have at least some

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<sup>150</sup> E.g., Mao, pp. 476-78; Saney, pp. 19-20; Christman, editor's introduction, p. 4; Ulam, p. 293.

<sup>151</sup> Duncan, p. 120 (editor's note to Barbour's Book 3).

<sup>152</sup> That personal ambition was Bruce's principal motive can be inferred from Barrow, pp. xii, 17-18, 33, 41-44, 84, 110, 121-22, 124, 141, 142-44, 146, 150, 174, 200, 202, 245, 254, 262, 313.

<sup>153</sup> Cruelties inflicted on English: Barrow, pp. 197, 236, 240, 243, 248, 254, 256, 262; on Scots: pp. 174, 175-77, 181-82, 189, 190, 194, 256; on Irish, p. 315. See also Duncan, loc. cit. and passim.

<sup>154</sup> See Kee, pp. 351-470.

<sup>155</sup> See NEB (2003), Vol. 26, “Propaganda,” pp. 176, 177.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

superficial acquaintance with anti-tech ideas. Moreover, even long before the arrival of a crisis and even in sectors where the revolutionaries cannot hope to win any active support, their message can promote discontent and disillusionment and thus help to set the stage for the arrival of the crisis. See in this chapter section 1, third point:, and Alinsky as quoted in section 8.

## Section 25

A revolutionary movement must maintain clear lines of demarcation that separate it from other radical groups holding ideologies that to some extent resemble its own.<sup>157</sup> This is a corollary to the need for unity that we stressed in section 17: A social or political movement can't be unified if it has many members whose loyalty is divided between their own movement and some other. Moreover, a movement needs to have a clear and unmistakable identity of its own; this is necessary not only for the internal cohesion of the movement itself, but also so that outsiders will easily recognize the movement and will respect it (see section 1, second point:, and section 16). In addition, the movement needs to keep itself strictly independent of all other groups. Dependence upon or too close a linkage with another group will prevent a revolutionary organization from acting in the interest of its own goals when these conflict with the goals of the other group.

One movement from which an anti-tech organization needs to separate itself definitively is that of the radical environmentalists; another is anarchoprimitivism. Most radical environmentalists do not contemplate the elimination of the entire technological system. An anti-tech organization can't afford to have members who are not sure they really want to eliminate modern technology, nor can it afford to be linked with a movement that holds an ambivalent position respecting technology. The anarchoprimitivists do want to eliminate modern technology, but other goals are at least equally important to them: gender equality, gay rights, animal liberation, etc.—the whole catalog of leftist issues.<sup>158</sup> Elsewhere we've explained why an anti-tech movement must emphatically distance itself from leftism.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> “[A] great deal of [Lenin’s] writing is devoted to the drawing of lines between his group and others... there was this great emphasis on sharp differentiation... .” Selznick, p. 127. See Lenin, “What Is to Be Done?,” Chapt. I, section D; in Christman, pp. 69-70.

<sup>158</sup> See ISAIF, 11 6-32, 213-230; Kaczynski, Letter to M.K.; Green Anarchy # 8, “Place the Blame Where It Belongs,” p. 19; Kevin Tucker’s letter to the editors of *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* # 62 (Fall-Winter 2006), pp. 72-73; and this writer’s own letter to the editors of the same journal, # 63 (Spring/Summer 2007), pp. 81-82.

<sup>159</sup> Kaczynski, Preface to the First and Second Editions, points 3 & 4, and ISAIF, 11 213-230.

## Section 26

In its relations with rival radical groups, a revolutionary organization should avoid getting entangled in sterile, interminable wrangles over ideology. Such wrangles have been prevalent, for example, in anarchist circles. Some anarchists seem to spend most of their time and energy on theoretical squabbles with other anarchists and very little on efforts to bring about the social changes that they advocate. Neither side in these disputes ever succeeds in persuading the other, and no one but the participants has any interest in the arguments offered.

Seldom indeed will you succeed in persuading your opponents in an ideological dispute. allerefore, in any such dispute, your arguments should be designed not to persuade your opponents but to influence undecided third parties who may hear or read the arguments. For this purpose you should state your case concisely, as clearly and convincingly as possible, and in a way that will make it interesting to third parties. allen do what you can to ensure that your arguments are widely heard or read. Address only the most important points and leave out the minor ones, for third parties will be interested only in the main lines of the arguments. Squabbles over arcane technical points are worse than a waste of time because third parties, if they read them at all, will probably view them with disdain and may compare you to the medieval theologians who quarreled over the number of angels who could dance on the point of a pin. Similar principles apply to debates with the defenders of the existing system, and with those who don't defend the system as it now exists but think it can be reformed.

When one is confronted with arguments that attack one's ideas or one's group one is strongly tempted to answer them, and the more unreasonable the arguments are, the stronger is the temptation to answer them. But before one gives in to this temptation one should ask what advantages, if any, one's answer can win for the revolutionary organization, and one should consider whether there are other ways of spending one's time and energy that will be more useful. for revolutionary purposes than an answer to the offensive arguments would be.

The way to prevail over rival radical groups is not to argue with them but to outflank them: Focus on recruiting to your organization any suitable persons who are predisposed to reject modern technology but are undecided among the various factions. Show that your organization is more active and effective than other radical groups. allis will bring more people over to your viewpoint than any amount of argument **will** do.

## Section 27

“[T]he most precious of all revolutionary qualities, loyalty, has its inevitable counterpart in treachery.”<sup>160</sup> Members of any radical organization need to bear in mind at all times the likelihood that their group includes informers who will report their

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<sup>160</sup> Matthews, p. 103.

activities to law-enforcement or intelligence agencies, and they should remember that even individuals who are currently loyal may turn traitor at some later date.

From 1956 to 1971 the FBI implemented a program known as COINTELPRO that involved, among other things, the systematic infiltration of informers into groups that the FBI found politically objectionable.<sup>161</sup> COINTELPRO under that name has long since been discontinued but, needless to say, the FBI still uses similar methods today. In 2006, members of a group of eco-saboteurs were arrested with the help of an FBI informer who had infiltrated radical-environmentalist circles.<sup>162</sup> At about the same time, in a related operation, the FBI arrested the group that had been responsible for the spectacular eco-arson at Vail, Colorado in 1998. One of the group's members had turned traitor and helped the FBI to collect evidence; some of the others subsequently testified against their comrades in order to get shorter sentences for themselves.<sup>163</sup>

In South Africa the police used spies and informers with devastating effect against anti-apartheid activists, and some of the activists, when subjected to interrogation, gave information that helped the police to arrest their colleagues.<sup>164</sup> In Ireland, revolutionary groups were regularly infiltrated by government informers (though by 1919, under Michael Collins, the revolutionaries had turned the tables and developed a much better intelligence network than that of the government).<sup>165</sup> Fidel Castro's guerrilleros felt it necessary to execute many traitors whom they discovered in their ranks.<sup>166</sup> Of the members of Che Guevara's guerrilla band in Bolivia, some who were captured gave the authorities information about the members who were still free.<sup>167</sup> During the period in which the Social Democrats of Germany were outlawed (1878-1890), they established an "intelligence system" for the purpose of "sifting and analyzing raw information to uncover informers and agents provocateur[s],"<sup>168</sup> but this did not entirely protect them against infiltration by police agents.<sup>169</sup> Even one of the delegates to the Social Democrats' secret congress at Wyden Castle in Switzerland (August 1880) was

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<sup>161</sup> "COINTELPRO" stands for "Counterintelligence Program." For information about COINTELPRO, see Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, Final Report, S. Rep. No. 755, Book II (Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans) and Book III (Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans), 94th Congress, Second Session (1976). Also, *Hobson v. Wilson*, 737 F2d 1 (D.C. Cir. 1984) (this means Vol. 737, Federal Reporter, Second Series, p. 1, United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, 1984).

<sup>162</sup> *Warrior Wind* No. 2, pp. 1-2 (available at the University of Michigan's Special Collections Library in Ann Arbor). The informer may even have been an agente provocatrice. *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Lipsher, pp. 1A, 25A. Three of the names mentioned in Lipsher's article (Gerlach, Ferguson, Rodgers) are also mentioned in *Warrior Wind* No. 2, pp. 5,8.

<sup>164</sup> Sampson, pp. 170, 171, 183, 245-47, 254, 258-260, 313-14, 387.

<sup>165</sup> Kee, pp. 563, 648.

<sup>166</sup> Matthews, pp. 102-03.

<sup>167</sup> Guevara, e.g., p. 261.

<sup>168</sup> Lidtke, p. 94.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

“in the pay of the Berlin Police President.”<sup>170</sup> In Russia, the revolutionary movement was thoroughly infiltrated with spies and informers.<sup>171</sup> The Social Revolutionaries’ ‘Combat Organization’ was headed for a time by a police agent,<sup>172</sup> and according to Trotsky, as noted in section 10, above, three of the seven members of the Bolsheviks’ St. Petersburg committee in 1914 were police agents.<sup>173</sup> A prominent Bolshevik named Roman Malinovsky, who was the party’s spokesman in the Duma and played a critical role in the founding of **Pravda**, later turned out to be a police agent. Even after it should have been evident that Malinovsky was a spy, Lenin refused to believe it.<sup>174</sup>

The pattern is consistent and the lesson is clear: A radical group can never safely assume that its plans or its activities are unknown to the government. Thus, a legal revolutionary organization is well advised to remain exactly that: strictly legal.<sup>175</sup> Any sort of dabbling in illegal activities is extremely dangerous.

## Section 28

It is important to study the history and the methods of earlier social and political movements and the techniques developed by successful leaders of such movements. It is a serious mistake to reject out of hand the techniques and the theories of revolutionaries or activists of the past merely because their goals were incompatible with anti-tech goals or because they were leftists or reformists. It’s true that many of their methods must be rejected as unsuitable for use by an anti-tech organization today, and of their other methods many must be modified to adapt them to such use. Neither history nor the principles laid down by past leaders will provide formulas or recipes for success that can be applied in cookbook fashion. But they provide ideas, of which some may lead to methods that are suitable for anti-tech use while others may call our attention to dangers or stumbling-blocks that we need to avoid.

Mao emphasized not only the importance of learning from the experience of the past as recorded in history, but also that theories derived from past experience were often incomplete and needed to be corrected through further experience. Similarly, principles of action found to be valid in other contexts might not be applicable to the concrete situations arising in the development of a given revolution. Consequently, from among such principles revolutionaries needed to sort out what was useful for their purposes

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.,p.98.

<sup>171</sup> Ulam, e.g., pp. 87, 95n16, 107, 114. Interesting information about the methods of the Tsar’s secret police can be found in Vassilyev.

<sup>172</sup> Pipes,p.25n2. Ulam,pp. 72-73.

<sup>173</sup> Trotsky, Vol.One, p.37.

<sup>174</sup> Ulam, pp. 113, 114, 121, 123, 125&n19, 320. Pipes, pp. 24-25. It may be, however, that Lenin “allowed for” the possibility that Malinovsky was a spy, “but thought that... the Bolsheviks benefited more than the police from his duplicity.” Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Kaczynski, Letters to David Skrbina: Sept. 18, 2004, second paragraph; Jan. 3,2005, Fifth point:.



from what was useless, discard the useless, and modify the useful to adapt it to their own needs.<sup>176</sup>

It takes hard work to study the history and the methods of past movements and to sort out the useful from the useless. But if you fail to learn from the past then you condemn yourself to learning everything all over again, by trial and error. This is a slow, halting, and difficult process. A good deal of trial and error **will** be necessary anyway, but the number of trials needed and the number of errors committed will be greatly reduced if you put out the effort demanded by a careful study of earlier movements and their methods. A refusal to make this effort will seriously diminish your chances of success.

This writer has had no opportunity to study more than a few of the works of history, political science, sociology, and revolutionary theory that may be relevant to the anti-tech enterprise. Worthy of careful attention are the works of Alinsky, Selznick, Smelser, and Trotsky that appear in our List of Works Cited. But there is a vast amount of other relevant literature that deserves to be explored; for example, the literature of the academic field known as "Organizational Behavior," and the works of Lenin to the extent that they deal with revolutionary strategy and tactics (his ideological hokum is merely of historical interest). Thorough library research will reveal an unending series of other relevant works. It is worth repeating that this literature will provide no recipes for action that can be applied mechanically. It will provide ideas, some of which can be applied, with suitable modifications, to the purposes of an anti-tech organization.

## Section 29

Lets illustrate the foregoing with a concrete example. Selznick explains how Communists operating in countries outside the socialist bloc would infiltrate non-Communist organizations, find their way into key positions within such organizations, and use those positions to influence the activity of the organizations in question. In some cases the organizations were taken over completely and made into appendages of the Communist Party. The Communists did not find it necessary to place large number's of their people in the organizations that they sought to influence or control; a relatively small number of individuals, strategically placed and well organized, could exercise great power'.<sup>177</sup>

For an anti-tech movement today there can be no question of simply copying Communist tactics. But careful study of a book like Selznick's can lead to ideas such as the following ones:

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<sup>176</sup> Mao, pp. 58-59, 61-62, 71-72, 77-80, 198-208. Not everything in this paragraph was explicitly stated by Mao, but all of it can be inferred from what he did state explicitly.

<sup>177</sup> All this is a major theme of Selznick's book. See, e.g., pp. 66-67, 90, 118-19, 150-54, 171-72, 175, 189-190, 208-09, 212&n43.

An anti-tech organization will have some degree of affinity with radical environmentalism. Many people tend to associate the term “radical environmentalist” only with illegal groups like Earth Liberation Front (ELF), but here we apply the term to any individual or group advocating environmental solutions that are too radical to have any chance of acceptance by the mainstream in modern society. For example, Bill McKibben—author of *Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age*—is a radical environmentalist by our definition, though as far as we know his work has always been entirely legal. Since we’ve already emphasized that a revolutionary organization committed to open, political action should maintain strict legality (section 27), it follows that the members of such an organization should avoid any involvement in illegal actions by radical environmentalists. But this need not prevent anti-tech revolutionaries from participating in the legal activities of radical environmentalist groups and seeking positions of power and influence within such groups. This power and influence could be used to the advantage of an anti-tech organization in various ways. For example:

(i) The anti-tech organization may be able to find suitable recruits for itself among the members of radical environmentalist groups.

(ii) If a member of the anti-tech organization can find a place on the editorial board of a radical environmentalist periodical (for instance, the *Earth First!* journal), he will be able to influence the content of the periodical. If a majority of anti-tech people can be placed on the editorial board, they will be able in effect to take the periodical over, minimize its leftist content, and use it systematically for the propagation of anti-tech ideas.

(iii) If an anti-tech organization decides to undertake action on an environmental issue as suggested in section 17 of this chapter, and if it has power and influence within radical environmentalist groups, then it should be able to secure support and cooperation from these groups in carrying out the action in question.

(iv) In some cases the anti-tech revolutionaries may be able to take over a radical environmentalist group altogether and turn it into an antitech group. Under these circumstances leftists can be expected to drift away from the group, and in their place the group will attract recruits who are predisposed to anti-tech.

(v) Work in radical environmentalist groups will provide anti-tech revolutionaries with valuable training and experience in leadership and organizational work.<sup>178</sup>

(vi) When an acute crisis of the system arrives, the power and influence that anti-tech revolutionaries wield within radical environmentalist groups will be useful in the effort to organize on a mass basis.

None of this is inconsistent with the rule that the anti-tech movement must maintain clear lines of demarcation between itself and other radical movements. Lenin’s emphasis on such lines of demarcation did not prevent him from collaborating—when he found it useful—with leaders of groups whose programs were in conflict with that of his

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<sup>178</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 19.

own group.<sup>179</sup> Of course, members of the anti-tech organization who are asked to work within radical environmentalist groups will have to be clearly aware of the importance of the lines of demarcation. They will need to understand that their purpose in working with radical environmentalists is solely to win advantages for anti-tech and not to promote any radical environmentalist goals that may be inconsistent with anti-tech goals.

How can anti-tech revolutionaries get themselves into positions of power and influence in radical environmentalist groups? The most important way will be through

the moral authority of hard work. In every organization which they seek to capture, the communists are the readiest volunteers, the most devoted committee workers, the most alert and active participants. In many groups, this is in itself sufficient to gain the leadership; it is almost always enough to justify candidacy [for leadership].<sup>180</sup>

The [Communists] in penetrating an organization... become the 'best workers' for whatever goals the organization seeks to attain.<sup>181</sup>

This approach can be supplemented with a technique that Nelson Mandela used with outstanding success to get and keep leadership of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa: He strictly controlled his emotions, rarely allowed himself to show anger, remained always calm, self-possessed, even-tempered.<sup>182</sup> This kind of deportment wins respect and encourages others to look to an individual for leadership. Among the Andaman Islanders, a potential chief was "a young adult in the camp who possessed the virtues that attract even younger men to seek his company. He was usually a good hunter, generous, and, above all, even-tempered"<sup>183</sup>

A revolutionary working in a radical environmentalist group won't need to conceal his anti-tech commitment. But for obvious reasons he must avoid pushing anti-tech ideas aggressively, and he must not show disrespect for radical environmentalists' ideas. If he argues in favor of antitech he must do so in a good-humored way, and if an ideological discussion becomes heated or angry he must withdraw from it.

For the present this writer is not actually recommending that an anti-tech organization should use these methods to gain power and influence within the radical environmentalist movement. The leaders of an anti-tech organization will make that decision when the time comes, and they will take into account the resources of their organization, the opportunities available to it, and any other relevant factors. The point here

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., pp. 126-28.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p.250.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.,p.319. Of course, anti-tech people in a radical environmentalist group will be able to work only for those radical environmentalist goals that do not conflict with the goals of their own anti-tech organization.

<sup>182</sup> Sampson, pp. 210,215,242,337,491,574. Azorin in his recommendations for political leadership, Sections XIV, XLV, emphasized these same qualities of equanimity and self-control.

<sup>183</sup> Coon,p.243 (emphasis added).

is simply that the ideas outlined in this section are at least worthy of serious consideration, and ' that this writer would never have thought of those ideas if he hadn't studied Selznick's book. This example shows how the histories and the techniques of past movements can be an important source of ideas for an anti-tech movement today.

## Section 30

A revolutionary organization will need a section or a committee devoted to studying technology and keeping up with technological developments, and not only for the purpose of attacking technology politically. The organization also needs to be able to apply technology for its own revolutionary purposes.

It is well known that in the United States (and probably in most other countries) law-enforcement and intelligence agencies have long made use of wire-tapping—often illegally—to keep track of the plans and activities of politically suspect groups. But nowadays old-fashioned tapping of telephone lines is becoming obsolete and far more sophisticated eavesdropping techniques are available,<sup>184</sup> along with such tools for spying as ubiquitous surveillance cameras, face-recognition technology, hummingbird-sized (perhaps even insect-sized) drones, and mind-reading machines.<sup>185</sup>

In the United States, eavesdropping or spying by a government agency, unless authorized by a court of law, violates the Fourth Amendment's prohibition of unreasonable searches, and at least in some cases is illegal. But in all of the extensive legal research that this writer has conducted in relation to constitutional rights, he has never come across a single case in which government agents have actually been prosecuted for illegal eavesdropping or spying.. While a civil lawsuit might theoretically be possible in some cases, we can say for practical purposes that almost the only legal defense against the government's illicit surveillance consists in the fact that evidence obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment cannot be used in a criminal prosecution against the victim of the violation.<sup>186</sup> But there will be no prospect of criminal prosecution

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<sup>184</sup> See, e.g., *The Week*, Oct. 8, 2010, p. 8, and April 13, 2012, p. 16.

<sup>185</sup> E.g.: Cameras: *The Week*, Sept. 9, 2011, p. 14; *USA Today* Jan. 4, 2013, p. 7A. Face recognition: *The Economist*, July 30, 2011, p. 56. Drones: *Time*, Oct. 22, 2007, p. 17 and Nov. 28, 2011, pp. 66-67; *The Week* Jan. 14, 2011, p. 20, March 4, 2011, p. 22, Dec. 23, 2011, p. 14, June 15, 2012, p. 11, and June 28, 2013, pp. 36-37; *The Economist*, April 2, 2011, p. 65; *Wired* July 2012, pp. 100-111; *Air & Space*, Dec. 2012/Jan. 2013, pp. 32-39; Ripley, pp. 67-74. Mind-reading machines: *The Economist*, Oct. 29, 2011, pp. 18, 93-94; *Time*, Nov. 28, 2011, p. 67; *The Week*, Feb. 17, 2012, p. 23; *USA Today*, April 23, 2014, p. 5A. Massive collection of data on individual citizens: *The Week*, Jan. 29, 2010, p. 14 and Sept. 17, 2010, p. 15; *USA Today* Jan. 7, 2013, p. 6A. The facts revealed by Edward Snowden have been so widely publicized that it hardly seems necessary to cite any articles, but as an example we mention *USA Today*, June 17, 2013, pp. 1A-2A. Miscellaneous: *The Atlantic*, Nov. 2016, pp. 34-35. The foregoing is only a sample. Anyone who wants to take the trouble can easily dig up unlimited amounts of scary stuff about surveillance.

<sup>186</sup> This is the "exclusionary rule." In practice, the federal courts generally enforce the exclusionary rule reluctantly and tend to invent exceptions to it.

of members of a revolutionary organization that carefully maintains the legality of its activities. Consequently, government agencies will have no incentive to refrain from eavesdropping or spying on such an organization in disregard of the Fourth Amendment.. Unconstitutionally and illegally acquired knowledge of the plans and activities of the organization may give the authorities a decisive advantage and enable them to sabotage the organizations efforts in various legal or illegal way's (as was done, for example, in the COINTELPRO program that we mentioned in section 27). Revolutionaries therefore need to be well informed about eavesdropping and spying technology, and need to have the technical capacity to defend themselves against its illegal use.

As time passes, it becomes less and less likely that revolutions in technologically advanced countries can be consummated by traditional methods; for example, by crowds of people taking to the streets. A careful study has shown that, for the traditional type of revolution, aid to the revolutionaries by elements of the military, or at least the neutrality of the latter, is usually required for success.<sup>187</sup> In the "Arab Spring" revolution of 2011 in Egypt, for instance, it is probable that the top military leaders gave in to many of the protesters' demands only because they feared that if it ever came to a showdown and they found it necessary to order crowds to be machine-gunned,<sup>188</sup> many of their troops would refuse to obey and might even defect to the revolutionaries. But techniques of crowd control are becoming ever more sophisticated: People can now be dispersed or incapacitated with superpowerful sound-blasters and strobe torches,<sup>189</sup> and a soldier who would refuse to shoot into a crowd of his fellow citizens might have no qualms about blasting them off the streets with unendurable volumes of sound. Following a riot, police will be able to track down participants with the help of images from surveillance cameras, face-recognition technology, and records of telephone traffic.<sup>190</sup>

More importantly, the replacement of humans by machines in the military is proceeding apace.<sup>191</sup> At the moment, human soldiers and policemen are still necessary, but, given the accelerating rate of technological development, it is all too possible that within a couple of decades police and military forces may consist largely of robots. These presumably will be immune to subversion and will have no inhibitions about shooting down protesters.

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<sup>187</sup> Russell (the entire book).

<sup>188</sup> E.g., in 1923, French troops occupying the Ruhr opened up with a machine gun on a crowd of protesters, killing 13. Gilbert, *European Powers*, pp. 110-11. But these were not their fellow Frenchmen.

<sup>189</sup> "New riot-control technology: The sound and the fury," *theEconomist*, Aug. 13, 2011, p.56.

<sup>190</sup> E.g., "The BlackBerry riots," *theEconomist*, Aug. 13, 2011, p. 52.

<sup>191</sup> Milstein, pp. 40-47. Whittle, pp. 28-33. Markoff, "Pentagon Offers Robotics Prize," p. B4. *The Economist*, April 2, 2011, p. 65. *National Geographic*, Aug. 2011, pp. 82-83. *Time*, Jan. 9, 2012, p. 30. Cf. Kaczynski, Letter to David Skrbina: March 17, 2005, Part III.D.

Of course, technology can be used by rebels, too, against the established power-structure.<sup>192</sup> Thus, a future revolution probably will not be carried out in the same way as any of the revolutions of the past or present. Instead, the outcome will depend heavily on technological manipulations, both by the authorities and by the revolutionaries. The importance for revolutionaries of technological competence is therefore evident.

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<sup>192</sup> E.g.: Acohido, "Hactivist group," p. 1B. Acohido & Eisler, p. 5A. 1he Week, Feb. 18, 2011, p. 6.1he Economist, March 19, 2011, pp. 89-90; Dec. 10, 2011, p. 34. USA Today, June 1, 2011, p. 2A; June 11, 2012, p. 1A; July 2, 2015, p. 3B; Nov. 13-15, 2015, p. 1A. Ripley, pp. 70, 72.

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