

CHAPTER VIII

Conclusions

If we have created
government, we should
certainly be allowed
to change it.

THOMAS PAINE

author / patriot

IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

Unregulated and unrestricted economic capitalism not only reflects the historic arrogance and selfishness of Earth's privileged classes, it is incompatible with the ideals and objectives of a political democracy.

Respected scholars and economists have always understood that the narrow focus of rich capitalists upon profit while ignoring the welfare of the working citizens who actually produce such profits, has been the defect in the republic's foundation destined to destroy it.

If the gargantuan appetite of such a capitalism for resources and markets is allowed to continue unchecked, there is only one possible ending: the economic conquest of planet Earth, the transformation of all existing cultures into consumer cultures, and the continuing degradation and possible destruction of the planet by comparatively few men and their giant corporations.

The replacement of political rule with economic rule has already begun with the transformation of many European old-line political states into the economic "European Union." The concept of EU is driven by the needs of giant corporations for markets and profits, not the desires of varied people to become one equal, inseparable body, or by a people to attain equality, justice, and economic security. As such, it isn't truly a "transformation" as much as it is the subordination of European states to economic conglomerates.

In the United States, the Republican Party, official representative of wealth, is doing everything possible to duplicate the example of the European Union. It is dismantling or removing federal powers created by the New Deal Administration to protect workers from the consequences of unrestrained corporate greed, and bestowing these powers upon the fifty state governments, each of which has always been controlled by its dominant corporate interests. The inevitable result: the subordination of American politic units to economic conglomerates.

If you have little fear of corporate rule, then consider the situation from another perspective.

The owners and controllers of these corporations are the elite families of the United States. Among them are those individuals and families

who used their influence to allow German war criminals to escape punishment after World War I and who supported Hitler and his Nazi ideals during World War II—and again allowed their murderous associates to escape punishment after the war.

These are the people who put us into the artificially contrived Korean and Vietnam horrors that killed 100,000 American boys. These are the people who authorized American troops to intimidate or kill any foreigners resisting American corporate intrusion into their country. These are the people who authorized the training of foreign police in methods that were responsible for the brutal torture and death of millions of innocent Latin America people. These are the people who have stolen from us as corporate executives and lied to us as public servants. These are the people who are involving us in the artificial "War on Terrorism." These are the people who are the most dangerous threat to world peace today.

What working Americans don't understand is that the victory—and avoidance of further conflict with American workers—denied these people in their partnership with the German Nazis in the 1940s they now accomplish with wile and will.

They have used their patience and their ability to make long-range plans. They now control the most efficient economic system and the most powerful war machine ever seen on planet Earth. This gives them an immense power over all weaker nations, a power they wield recklessly.

A rose by any other name is still a rose, and fascism is still fascism, even if it is called "capitalism," and you should be scared to death that such capitalist fascists rule the republic.

The Establishment controlled news and entertainment media's saturation with terrorism and war creates a false reality for millions of unknowing, naive Americans. It's the technique that was used to promote and legitimize the Establishments contrived Drug War, and as destructively successful as that war has been, so will its illogical war on terrorism be if not challenged and stopped.

And don't forget, it's the technique used by Oceania's Establishment to control its common citizens.

Millions of Americans have shown their fear and opposition to the Establishment's aggressive and unnecessary "War on Terrorism and its

“Free Global Trade” doctrine.” They have marched in protest through the streets of major cities, placed page ads in major newspapers, called, written, faxed, and emailed their political representatives protesting the Establishment’s stance.

Most Americans, however, are unaware of this wide spread movement in the republic, for such news is usually placed on the back pages of newspapers and downplayed by television newscasters.

Nor are the protestors ever acknowledged as American citizens with a valid concern of the issues they protest, but rather they are branded as “activists,” “extremists,” “leftists” “young idealists,” or some such label that the media has successfully programmed the public to accept as socially unacceptable and dangerous to society.

But the greatest harm these people have done to the cause of true freedom is to program generations of young Americans with informational trivia and ideals of self-indulgence. This has deprived millions of young Americans of the relevant information identifying the republic’s ruling class as fascist bullies. It has also denied them the opportunity to mature and morph into responsible adults capable of performing the essential civic duties necessary to maintain a democracy.

Thomas Paine once wrote, “Young people don’t give up hope. If you participate the future is yours”

Paine’s words are no less true today than when they were written more than 200 years ago. They apply, however, not only to young Americans but to all Americans: to female Americans, poor Americans, Christian Americans, Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans, atheist Americans, white Americans, black Americans, yellow Americans, red Americans and all in-between-color Americans.

We must no longer allow ourselves to be artificially divided into opposing groups such as black and white, young and old, male and female, Republican and Democratic, Baby Boomer or Generation X, nor a hundred and one other artificial divisions the Establishment media has used to successfully divide our political force—and our votes.

“American citizen” is our common denominator. For purposes of rallying our forces, however, we must assemble as “working American citizens,” and voluntarily discard all of the artificial distinctions we have sub-

missively accepted. We working Americans have always possessed the latent power to change society with our votes, but we never have, which is why today’s privileged generations are as contemptuous of us as any generation of rich people have been of the common masses.

The vote is the only weapon we’ll ever need in a true democracy. Take advantage of the one we now have, while we still have it, to remove the power of the republic from these people who wield it so recklessly for personal benefit.

We must form a new political party, a party with a platform dedicated to the creation of a social system similar to the fictional America of Gottlieb’s World; a party that will self destruct once the mechanism for such a new government is established, ending the existence of political parties and pseudo-representative democracy, once and for all.

The belief of so many Americans who claim, “I’m not involved in politics, because it has nothing to do with my needs and wants in life” is wrong. As wrong as possibly could be!

If you don’t live in a brute force society, “politics” has everything to do with your needs and wants. Politics is about money and wealth: who gets it, and who doesn’t. It’s related to how little you make in wages or salary, how much politicians can take of your earnings in taxes, and how much the business community can steal from you with overpriced products. It affects the nation’s socialization processes and determines which information you will be given during your lifetime, and which you will not.

Some people might say that this book incites revolution. But what else is it about, other than an attempt to prompt you and other common Americans to join and rebel against a form of government that is destroying us as individuals, and as a nation? What options remain to reasoning people, other than to try taking power away from those who hold it?

None. There are no other options, for there can be no compromise with oppression or repression. Ever. A little of either is just as objectionable as a lot.

Make no mistake about it, the book does advocate revolution, but it’s not class revolution. It’s not changing a system that benefits one class of people to one benefiting another; not at all. It advocates changing a social system designed to benefit some citizens to one that will benefit all citizens.

There's a big difference between the two.

Nor is it a new revolution being proposed, but a continuation of the change begun in the 1770s and diverted with sneaky words by our "Founding Fathers" for their own benefit. It's the change expected by every colonial American commoner who fought to discard rule of the English king. It's the change advocated by the men and women of the Farmer's Grange and the People's Party of the late 19th century. It's the change advocated by the young American students of the '60s. It's the change for right over wrong, the change from pseudo-democracy to true democracy. And it's a change long overdue.

The possibility of positive change such as portrayed in Gottlieb's World may seem unrealistic to you, but be assured there's nothing unrealistic about the concepts of fictional America or New Government.

It's an absolute truth that whoever controls a nation's natural resources, its laws, its jobs, its money supply, its military force, and its production facilities can build any kind of society they want, for they are the Establishment. The focus of this book has been to persuade you to join with millions of other working Americans to actively create a participatory democracy, and become a part of a new American Establishment.

We Americans are at the crossroads of history. We confront a problem never before faced by commoners of an Earth society. We're in the process of being destroyed as a nation by our own Establishment, which must destroy us if it is to succeed in its selfish drive towards global rule and survival.

The deliberate division of Americans into fragmented segments, even into separate unique generations, the breakdown of the family and the trend of young Americans who, in their fear of social relationships, condemn themselves to lives of isolation, the rapid spread of ignorance and hate mongering, the increasing violence, the transformation of so many Americans into criminals, the steamroller rush to build privately operated prisons; all are omens of things to come.

Do we working Americans really want to be governed by a political system that favors corporations over people? Do we really want to be ruled by businessmen who already have shown their contempt for us? Who degrade us in a thousand-and-one ways? Who steal from us? Who

lie to us? Who deprive us of our earned pensions and economic security? Who corrupt our children with false values and role models?

Do we really want people whose prime values are profit and power to control weapons that can quickly and efficiently destroy entire cities with a push of a single button? Do we really want them to control the biological cloning of life, which our scientists have now proved possible?

Can there be any doubt what kind of future it will be if such technologies are placed into the hands of men who seek only wealth and power, the kind of men who supported Adolph Hitler and his dreams for world conquest and a super-race?

What will it take to make you and other American commoners fully comprehend that the experiment of representative democracy in America has failed us?

When this project was begun, it was believed to be relevant only to the American people. Eventually, however, it became clear that the saga of the United States is nothing more nor less than the continuing story of humanity: the story of human flight from all parts of the planet to the new North American continent in the quest for freedom from oppression.

In the broadest perspective, the loss of American freedom is of importance to all Earth commoners, for Americans represent all of humanity. The hopes of billions of commoners, past and present, for a better world for themselves and their children were placed in our hands. Whether we want it or not, we are the torchbearers of liberty for commoners everywhere.

If we working Americans cannot rise to this challenge; if we cannot ignore our superficial differences of skin color, religions, and ethnic heritage, which are greater today than at any period of the past; if we cannot understand we are all the same, with the same fears and dreams and the same enemy; if we cannot consciously work together to make this a better place for all of us to live and raise our children, then there is no hope for us. There is no hope for humanity.

Communism, socialism, and American-style democracy have not reduced or eliminated poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, or war. Neither has any other contemporary method of social order. Nor have any of the major forms of organized religion accomplished these goals. What have we

got to lose by trying something new? We certainly can do no worse for ourselves.

If we can trust neither the corporate community nor the political community to guarantee our physical and economic security, then whom can we trust but ourselves? If the political system is our system, as we've been told a million and one times, and if we working commoners truly possess the power to change it, then why don't we use this power to change it to a system that does promise to guarantee our economic, emotional, and intellectual well-being?

It's time to throw out the arrogant American aristocracy and their political puppets and get them off our backs and out of our pockets. It's time for millions of discontented and frustrated American commoners to rise up and discard the unjust, wasteful, social system that distorts and warps our lives. It's time to change an economic system that depends upon hordes of hungry workers and continual war to survive.

It's time to cut the umbilical cord to a past that chains us to the pillars of ignorance and subservience.

LET'S DO IT!

Technology can't make the U.S. a better society in which to live, it can make it only a more comfortable place. Only people willing to act on their beliefs can make this a better society.

Nor is it a willingness to do good that will change the country for the better, it's a willingness to combat bad. Doing good—aiding the poor and hungry of our society—won't change their condition. They're poor and hungry because the American System produces poor, hungry people.

More than 150 years ago, in 1849, Henry David Thoreau asked:

Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing the rights of man?

It is not only possible to improve our form of government, but absolutely necessary if we are to survive as a nation.

In his inaugural speech, in 1861, Abraham Lincoln remarked:

This country belongs to the people and whenever they shall grow weary of their government they can exercise their constitutional right to amend it, or revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it

It is time to exercise our constitutional right to change the United States republic from a representative democracy to a single, cohesive, participatory democracy.

Such a change, however, isn't a single election to be won, or a condition to be established and then forgotten. Democracy is a lifelong commitment. It's something in which you continually participate, or you don't have it. It's a continuing process of preparing citizens to maintain, nourish, and safeguard the process.

The task of running the country shouldn't be too difficult, we commoners already perform most of society's important functions. We pick up the garbage, and drive the buses. We fly the planes, and teach in schools. We nurse in hospitals, and clerk in banks. We fight the fires, and fuel the engines of government. We are the volunteers who do—without pay—the essential things that must be done to prevent society from disintegrating, because the Establishment won't do them.

We owe the men and women of the American Establishment nothing. They are the people responsible for our nation's social illnesses and much of the death and destruction currently plaguing planet Earth. They're responsible for the poisoning of the planet. They're arrogant, cowardly people who pay killers and liars to do their dirty work for them. The only reason they still control the government is they want control more than we want to take it from them.

Edmund Burke once said, "The only thing necessary for the ultimate triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." He was right. You can join all the protest groups you want and voice your disapproval of this or that issue, but talk will change little. Talk won't remove the power of government from the people who wield this power against you.

What's needed is physical energy applied in the most efficient manner. What's needed is your vote to change the American System. What's needed is your active participation in New Government.

The challenge to create a true participatory democracy is the great-

est remaining challenge to be faced by Americans. It is the most important frontier we will ever have to cross, and we must cross it not only to survive as a free people, but also to survive as a species. There are no options.

For those of you who hesitate to tamper with tradition and law, read the words of Thomas Jefferson who was a true friend to common people despite all contemporary attempts to weaken his credibility by the nitpicking Establishment media:

...Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the arc of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment...But I know also that, laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind...Each generation is as independent as the one preceding...it has then, like them, a right to chose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness

We Earth people, bouncing around by the billions in our small circles of self-interest, with our propensity for self-indulgence and immediate gratification, our lack of cooperation and unity, and the ease with which we fear and hate are very much like the zillions of atoms chaotically zooming around space. What else can we create but chaotic, hostile social environments in which the organized few wield their greater force and take what they want?

As we enter the 21st century, American commoners must make an attempt to fuse the greater political force and form New Government, or the promise this country once offered to Earth's commoners as the haven from tyranny and persecution will soon disappear, and the brief two hundred and fifty years of hope in democracy and liberty will have risen and faded from Earth's scene as quickly as a shooting star flashes across the skies and disappears from view. And in our passivity, we will have condemned the future to the oppressiveness of the past.

There is no alternative. We must make the attempt.

It took the American Establishment a mere fifty years of concen-

trated effort to program Americans with many of the negative values that now divide and destroy the republic. Fifty years, that's all it should take to program current and new generations of Americans with the positive values and truths necessary to swing the pendulum a full 180 degrees.

If we start now, by the year 2050, this country could be well on its way toward being the haven of which commoners of all eras have dreamed, and the role model all will try to emulate.

Our choices are clearly marked. We must make all necessary changes to the social system immediately and transform the nation into a participatory democracy, or forever lose the means to make them peacefully.

Fellow commoners, the future will be whatever present generations will it to be. Let us will it to be this new America. Let those who prefer an improbable life-after-death or who wait for their shining knight on a white charger do nothing. But not you. Not me.

As we enter the 21st century, let's use our active energies to create a social order based upon consideration, cooperation, and knowledge. Let's show the people of planet Earth what Americans and the American Way are really about. Let's show them we possess the vision and the willpower to do what must be done.

Let posterity honor us for being the generation to consciously take the first step on the journey to the high-level. Let posterity honor us for intelligently attacking the problems of poverty, prejudice, and war. Let future Earth people know we were the ones who gave them the future.

My fellow Americans, let's do it!

And may the Greater-Force be with us, always.

*I dream of things that
never were, and say why not?*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

author / philosopher

ADDENDUM

1

The Avalon Project:

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN - 1789

The Avalon Project at Yale Law School

Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all.

Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.
5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.
6. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. It must be

the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.

7. No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the cases and according to the forms prescribed by law. Any one soliciting, transmitting, executing, or causing to be executed, any arbitrary order, shall be punished.

But any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shall submit without delay, as resistance constitutes an offense.

8. The law shall provide for such punishments only as are strictly and obviously necessary, and no one shall suffer punishment except it be legally inflicted in virtue of a law passed and promulgated before the commission of the offense.

9. As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty, if arrest shall be deemed indispensable, all harshness not essential to the securing of the prisoner's person shall be severely repressed by law.

10. No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.

11. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.

12. The security of the rights of man and of the citizen requires public military forces. These forces are, therefore, established for the good of all and not for the personal advantage of those to whom they shall be entrusted.

13. A common contribution is essential for the maintenance of the public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.

14. All the citizens have a right to decide, either personally or by their representatives, as to the necessity of the public contribution; to grant this freely; to know to what uses it is put; and to fix the proportion, the mode of assessment and of collection and the duration of the taxes.

15. Society has the right to require of every public agent an account of his administration.

16. A society in which the observance of the law is not assured, nor the separation of powers defined, has no constitution at all.

17. Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified.

PEOPLE'S PARTY PLATFORM

JULY 1892

ASSEMBLED upon the 116th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the People's Party of America, in the first national convention, invoking upon their action the blessing of Almighty God, put forth in the name and on behalf of the people of this country, the following preamble and declaration of principles:

PREAMBLE

The conditions which surround us best justify our co-operation; we meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and material ruin.

Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the Legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The people are demoralized; most of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places to prevent universal intimidation and bribery. The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists.

The urban workmen are denied the right to organize for self-protection, imported pauperized labor beats down their wages, a hiring standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down, and they are rapidly degenerating into European conditions.

The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of these, in turn, despise the Republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires.

The national power to create money is appropriated to enrich bondholders; a vast public debt payable in legal-tender currency has been funded into gold-bearing bonds, thereby adding millions to the burdens of the people.

Silver, which has been accepted as coin since the dawn of history, has been demonetized to add to the purchasing power of gold by decreasing the value of all forms of property as well as human labor, and the supply of currency is purposely abridged to fatten usurers, bankrupt enterprise, and enslave industry. A vast conspiracy against mankind has been organized on two continents, and it is rapidly taking possession of the world. If not met and overthrown at once it forbodes terrible social convulsions, the destruction of civilization, or the establishment of an absolute despotism.

We have witnessed for more than a quarter of a century the struggles of the two great political parties for power and plunder, while grievous wrongs have

been inflicted upon the suffering people. We charge that the controlling influences dominating both these parties have permitted the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to prevent or restrain them.

Neither do they now promise us any substantial reform. They have agreed together to ignore, in the coming campaign, every issue but one. They propose to drown the outcries of a plundered people with the uproar of a sham battle over the tariff, so that capitalists, corporations, national banks, rings, trusts, watered stock, the demonetization of silver and the oppressions of the usurers may all be lost sight of. They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives, and children on the altar of mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the millionaires.

Assembled on the anniversary of the birthday of the nation, and filled with the spirit of the grand general and chief who established our independence, we seek to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of the "plain people," with which class it originated. We assert our purposes to be identical with the purposes of the National Constitution; to form a more perfect union and establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity.

We declare that this Republic can only endure as a free government while built upon the love of the people for each other and for the nation; that it cannot be pinned together by bayonets; that the Civil War is over, and that every passion and resentment which grew out of it must die with it, and that we must be in fact, as we are in name, one united brotherhood of free men.

Our country finds itself confronted by conditions for which there is no precedent in the history of the world; our annual agricultural productions amount to billions of dollars in value, which must, within a few weeks or months, be exchanged for billions of dollars' worth of commodities consumed in their production; the existing currency supply is wholly inadequate to make this exchange; the results are falling prices, the formation of combines and rings, the impoverishment of the producing class. We pledge ourselves that if given power we will labor to correct these evils by wise and reasonable legislation, in accordance with the terms of our platform.

We believe that the power of government—in other words, of the people—should be expanded (as in the case of the postal service) as rapidly and as far as the good sense of an intelligent people and the teachings of experience shall justify, to the end that oppression, injustice, and poverty shall eventually cease in the land.

While our sympathies as a party of reform are naturally upon the side of every proposition which will tend to make men intelligent, virtuous, and temperate, we nevertheless regard these questions, important as they are, as secondary to the great issues now pressing for solution, and upon which not only our individual prosperity but the very existence of free institutions depend; and we will ask all men to first help us to determine whether we are to have a republic to administer before we differ as to the conditions upon which it is to be administered, believing

that the forces of reform this day organized will never cease to move forward until every wrong is righted and equal rights and equal privileges securely established for all the men and women of this country.

PLATFORM

We declare, therefore—

First—That the union of the labor forces of the United States this day consummated shall be permanent and perpetual; may its spirit enter into all hearts for the salvation of the Republic and the uplifting of mankind.

Second—Wealth belongs to him who creates it, and every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery. “If any will not work, neither shall he eat.” The interests of rural and civil labor are the same; their enemies are identical.

Third—We believe that the time has come when the railroad corporations will either own the people or the people must own the railroads; and should the government enter upon the work of owning and managing all railroads, we should favor an amendment to the constitution by which all persons engaged in the government service shall be placed under a civil-service regulation of the most rigid character, so as to prevent the increase of the power of the national administration by the use of such additional government employees.

FINANCE

We demand a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and that without the use of banking corporations; a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people, at a tax not to exceed 2 percent, per annum, to be provided as set forth in the sub-treasury plan of the Farmers’ Alliance, or a better system; also by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

1. We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1.

2. We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than \$50 per capita.

3. We demand a graduated income tax.

4. We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people, and hence we demand that all State and national revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government, economically and honestly administered.

5. We demand that postal savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the gov-

ernment should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people. The telegraph and telephone, like the post-office system, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

LAND

The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

EXPRESSION OF SENTIMENTS

Your Committee on Platform and Resolutions beg leave unanimously to report the following:

Whereas, Other questions have been presented for our consideration, we hereby submit the following, not as a part of the Platform of the People’s Party, but as resolutions expressive of the sentiment of this Convention.

1. Resolved, That we demand a free ballot and a fair count in all elections, and pledge ourselves to secure it to every legal voter without Federal intervention, through the adoption by the States of the unperverted Australian or secret ballot system.

2. Resolved, That the revenue derived from a graduated income tax should be applied to the reduction of the burden of taxation now levied upon the domestic industries of this country.

3. Resolved, That we pledge our support to fair and liberal pensions to ex-Union soldiers and sailors.

4. Resolved, That we condemn the fallacy of protecting American labor under the present system, which opens our ports to the pauper and criminal classes of the world and crowds out our wage-earners; and we denounce the present ineffective laws against contract labor, and demand the further restriction of undesirable emigration.

5. Resolved, That we cordially sympathize with the efforts of organized workmen to shorten the hours of labor, and demand a rigid enforcement of the existing eight-hour law on Government work, and ask that a penalty clause be added to the said law.

6. Resolved, That we regard the maintenance of a large standing army of mercenaries, known as the Pinkerton system, as a menace to our liberties, and we demand its abolition; and we condemn the recent invasion of the Territory of Wyoming by the hired assassins of plutocracy, assisted by Federal officers.

7. Resolved, That we commend to the favorable consideration of the people and the reform press the legislative system known as the initiative and referendum.

8. Resolved, That we favor a constitutional provision limiting the office of

President and Vice-President to one term, and providing for the election of Senators of the United States by a direct vote of the people.

9. Resolved, That we oppose any subsidy or national aid to any private corporation for any purpose.

10. Resolved, That this convention sympathizes with the Knights of Labor and their righteous contest with the tyrannical combine of clothing manufacturers of Rochester, and declare it to be a duty of all who hate tyranny and oppression to refuse to purchase the goods made by the said manufacturers, or to patronize any merchants who sell such goods.

3

PEOPLE'S PARTY PLATFORM

July 24, 1896.

The People's party, assembled in National Convention, reaffirms its allegiance to the principles declared by the founders of the Republic, and also to the fundamental principles of just government as enunciated in the platform of the party in 1892. We recognize that, through the connivance of the present and preceding Administrations, the country has reached a crisis in its national life as predicted in our declaration four years ago, and that prompt and patriotic action is the supreme duty of the hour.

We realize that, while we have political independence, our financial and industrial independence is yet to be attained by restoring to our country the constitutional control and exercise of the functions necessary to a people's government, which functions have been basely surrendered by our public servant to corporate monopolies.

The influence of European moneychangers has been more potent in shaping legislation than the voice of the American people. Executive power and patronage have been used to corrupt our Legislatures and defeat the will of the people, and plutocracy has thereby been enthroned upon the ruins of Democracy. To restore the Government intended by the fathers and for the welfare and prosperity of this and future generations, we demand the establishment of an economic and financial system, which shall make us masters of our own affairs and independent of European control by the adoption of the following:

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

FIRST. We demand a national money, safe and sound, issued by the General Government only, without the intervention of banks of issue, to be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private; a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people and through the lawful disbursements of the Government.

SECOND. We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the consent of foreign nations.

THIRD. We demand the volume of circulating medium be speedily increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business and population and to restore the just level of prices of labor and production.

FOURTH. We denounce the sale of bonds and the increase of the public interest-bearing debt made by the present Administration as unnecessary and without authority of law, and demand that no more bonds be issued except by specific act of Congress.

FIFTH. We demand such legislation as will prevent the demonetization of the lawful money of the United States by private contract.

SIXTH. We demand that the Government, in payment of its obligations, shall use its option as to the kind of lawful money in which they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and preceding Administrations for surrendering this option to the holders of Government obligations.

SEVENTH. We demand a graduated income tax to the end that aggregated wealth shall bear its just proportion of taxation, and we regard the recent decision of the Supreme Court relative to the Income Tax law as a misinterpretation of the Constitution and an invasion of the rightful powers of Congress over the subject of taxation.

EIGHTH. We demand that postal savings banks be established by the Government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

TRANSPORTATION

FIRST. Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the Government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people and on a non-partisan basis, to the end that all may be accorded the same treatment in transportation and that the tyranny and political power now exercised by the great railroad corporations, which result in the impairment if not the destruction of the political rights and personal liberties of the citizen, may be destroyed. Such ownership is to be accomplished gradually, in a manner consistent with sound public policy.

SECOND. The interest of the United States in the public highways built with public moneys and the proceeds of extensive grants of land to the Pacific Railroads should never be alienated, mortgaged, or sold, but guarded and protected for the general welfare as provided by the laws organizing such railroads.

The foreclosure of existing liens of the United States on these roads should at once follow default in the payment thereof by the debtor companies; and at the foreclosure sales of said roads the Government shall purchase the same if it becomes necessary to protect its interests therein, or if they can be purchased at a reasonable price; and the Government shall operate said railroads as public highways for the benefit of the whole people and not in the interest of the few under suitable provisions for protection of life and property, giving to all transportation interests equal privileges and equal rates for fares and freights.

THIRD. We denounce the present infamous schemes for refunding these

debts, and demand that the laws now applicable thereto be executed and administered according to their interest and spirit.

TELEGRAPH

The telegraphic, like the Post-office system, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the Government in the interest of the people.

LAND

FIRST. True policy demands that the National and State legislation shall be such as will ultimately enable every prudent and industrious citizen to secure a home, and, therefore, the land should not be monopolized for speculative purposes. All lands now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, should by lawful means be reclaimed by the Government and held for natural settlers only, and private land monopoly as well as alien ownership should be prohibited.

SECOND. We condemn the frauds by which the land grant Pacific Railroad Companies have, through the connivance of the Interior Department, robbed multitudes of actual bona fide settlers of their homes and miners of their claims, and we demand legislation by Congress which will enforce the exception of mineral land from such grants after as well as before the patent.

THIRD. We demand that bona fide settlers on all public lands be granted free homes, as provided in the National Homestead law, and that no exception be made in the case of Indian reservations when opened for settlement, and that all lands not now patented come under this demand.

DIRECT LEGISLATION

We favor a system of direct legislation, through the initiative and referendum, under proper constitutional safeguards.

GENERAL PROPOSITIONS

FIRST. We demand the election of President, Vice-President, and United States Senators by a direct vote of the people.

SECOND. We tender to the patriotic people of the country our deepest sympathies in their heroic struggle for political freedom and independence, and we believe the time has come when the United States, the great Republic of the world, should recognize that Cuba is and of right ought to be a free and independent State.

THIRD. We favor home rule in the Territories and the District of Columbia, and the early admission of the Territories as States.

FOURTH. All public salaries should be made to correspond to the price of labor and its products.

FIFTH. In times of great industrial depression idle labor should be employed

on public works as far as practicable.

SIXTH. The arbitrary course of the courts in assuming to imprison citizens for indirect contempt, and ruling them by injunction, should be prevented by proper legislation.

SEVENTH. We favor just pensions for our disabled Union soldiers.

EIGHTH. Believing that the elective franchise and an untrammelled ballot are essential to government of, for, and by the people, the People's party condemn the wholesale system of disfranchisement adopted in some of the States as unrepresentative and undemocratic, and we declare it to be the duty of the several State Legislatures to take such action as will secure a full, free and fair ballot and honest count.

NINTH. While the foregoing propositions constitute the platform upon which our party stands, and for the vindication of which its organization will be maintained, we recognize that the great and pressing issue of the pending campaign, upon which the present election will turn, is the financial question, and upon this great and specific issue between the parties we cordially invite the aid and co-operation of all organizations and citizens agreeing with us upon this vital quest

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THE PORT HURON MANIFESTO

1962

INTRODUCTION

Agenda for a Generation

We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.

When we were kids the United States was the wealthiest and strongest country in the world; the only one with the atom bomb, the least scarred by modern war, an initiator of the United Nations that we thought would distribute Western influence throughout the world. Freedom and equality for each individual, government of, by, and for the people—these American values we found good, principles by which we could live as men. Many of us began maturing in complacency.

As we grew, however, our comfort was penetrated by events too troubling to dismiss. First, the permeating and victimizing fact of human degradation, symbolized by the Southern struggle against racial bigotry, compelled most of us from silence to activism. Second, the enclosing fact of the Cold War, symbolized by the presence of the Bomb, brought awareness that we ourselves, and our friends, and millions of abstract "others" we knew more directly because of our common peril, might die at any time. We might deliberately ignore, or avoid, or fail to feel all other human problems, but not these two, for these were too immediate and crushing in

their impact, too challenging in the demand that we as individuals take the responsibility for encounter and resolution.

While these and other problems either directly oppressed us or rankled our consciences and became our own subjective concerns, we began to see complicated and disturbing paradoxes in our surrounding America. The declaration “all men are created equal...” rang hollow before the facts of Negro life in the South and the big cities of the North. The proclaimed peaceful intentions of the United States contradicted its economic and military investments in the Cold War status quo.

We witnessed, and continue to witness, other paradoxes. With nuclear energy whole cities can easily be powered, yet the dominant nation-states seem more likely to unleash destruction greater than that incurred in all wars of human history. Although our own technology is destroying old and creating new forms of social organization, men still tolerate meaningless work and idleness.

While two-thirds of mankind suffers under nourishment, our own upper classes revel amidst superfluous abundance. Although world population is expected to double in forty years, the nations still tolerate anarchy as a major principle of international conduct and uncontrolled exploitation governs the sapping of the earth’s physical resources. Although mankind desperately needs revolutionary leadership, America rests in national stalemate, its goals ambiguous and tradition-bound instead of informed and clear, its democratic system apathetic and manipulated rather than “of, by, and for the people.”

Not only did tarnish appear on our image of American virtue, not only did disillusion occur when the hypocrisy of American ideals was discovered, but we began to sense that what we had originally seen as the American Golden Age was actually the decline of an era. The worldwide outbreak of revolution against colonialism and imperialism, the entrenchment of totalitarian states, the menace of war, overpopulation, international disorder, supertechnology—these trends were testing the tenacity of our own commitment to democracy and freedom and our abilities to visualize their application to a world in upheaval.

Our work is guided by the sense that we may be the last generation in the experiment with living. But we are a minority—the vast majority of our people regard the temporary equilibriums of our society and world as eternally functional parts. In this is perhaps the outstanding paradox; we ourselves are imbued with urgency, yet the message of our society is that there is no viable alternative to the present. Beneath the reassuring tones of the politicians, beneath the common opinion that America will “muddle through,” beneath the stagnation of those who have closed their minds to the future, is the pervading feeling that there simply are no alternatives, that our times have witnessed the exhaustion not only of Utopias, but of any new departures as well.

Feeling the press of complexity upon the emptiness of life, people are fearful of the thought that at any moment things might be thrust out of control. They fear change itself, since change might smash whatever invisible framework seems to hold back chaos for them now. For most Americans, all crusades are suspect,

threatening. The fact that each individual sees apathy in his fellows perpetuates the common reluctance to organize for change. The dominant institutions are complex enough to blunt the minds of their potential critics, and entrenched enough to swiftly dissipate or entirely repel the energies of protest and reform, thus limiting human expectancies. Then, too, we are a materially improved society, and by our own improvements we seem to have weakened the case for further change.

Some would have us believe that Americans feel contentment amidst Prosperity—but might it not better be called a glaze above deeply felt anxieties about their role in the new world? And if these anxieties produce a developed indifference to human affairs, do they not as well produce a yearning to believe that there *is* an alternative to the present, that something *can* be done to change circumstances in the school, the workplaces, the bureaucracies, the government? It is to this latter yearning, at once the spark and engine of change, that we direct our present appeal.

The search for truly democratic alternatives to the present, and a commitment to social experimentation with them, is a worthy and fulfilling human enterprise, one which moves us and, we hope, others today. On such a basis do we offer this document of our convictions and analysis: as an effort in understanding and changing the conditions of humanity in the late twentieth century, an effort rooted in the ancient, still unfulfilled conception of man attaining determining influence over his circumstances of life.

VALUES

Making values explicit—an initial task in establishing alternatives—is an activity that has been devalued and corrupted. The conventional moral terms of the age, the politician moralities—“free world,” “people’s democracies”—reflect realities poorly, if at all, and seem to function more as ruling myths than as descriptive principles. But neither has our experience in the universities brought us moral enlightenment. Our professors and administrators sacrifice controversy to public relations; their curriculums change more slowly than the living events of the world; their skills and silence are purchased by investors in the arms race; passion is called unscholastic. The questions we might want raised—what is really important? Can we live in a different and better way? if we wanted to change society, how would we do it?—are not thought to be questions of a “fruitful, empirical nature,” and thus are brushed aside.

Unlike youth in other countries we are used to moral leadership being exercised and moral dimensions being clarified by our elders. But today, for us, not even the liberal and socialist preachments of the past seem adequate to the forms of the present. Consider the old slogans: Capitalism Cannot Reform Itself, United Front Against Fascism, General Strike, All Out on May Day. Or, more recently, No Cooperation with Commies and Fellow Travelers, Ideologies Are Exhausted, Bipartisanship, No Utopias. These are incomplete, and there are few new prophets.

It has been said that our liberal and socialist predecessors were plagued by

vision without program, while our own generation is plagued by program without vision. All around us there is astute grasp of method, technique—the committee, the ad hoc group, the lobbyist, the hard and soft sell, the make, the projected image—but, if pressed critically, such expertise is incompetent to explain its implicit ideals. It is highly fashionable to identify oneself by old categories, or by naming a respected political figure, or by explaining “how we would vote” on various issues.

Theoretic chaos has replaced the idealistic thinking of old—and, unable to reconstitute theoretic order, men have condemned idealism itself. Doubt has replaced hopefulness—and men act out a defeatism that is labeled realistic.

The decline of utopia and hope is in fact one of the defining features of social life today. The reasons are various: the dreams of the older left were perverted by Stalinism and never re-created; the Congressional stalemate makes men narrow their view of the possible; the specialization of human activity leaves little room for sweeping thought; the horrors of the twentieth century symbolized in the gas ovens and concentration camps and atom bombs, have blasted hopefulness. To be idealistic is to be considered apocalyptic, deluded. To have no serious aspirations, on the contrary, is to be “tough-minded.”

In suggesting social goals and values, therefore, we are aware of entering a sphere of some disrepute. Perhaps matured by the past, we have no formulas, no closed theories—but that does not mean values are beyond discussion and tentative determination. A first task of any social movement is to convince people that the search for orienting theories and the creation of human values is complex but worthwhile. We are aware that to avoid platitudes we must analyze the concrete conditions of social order. But to direct such an analysis we must use the guideposts of basic principles. Our own social values involve conceptions of human beings, human relationships, and social systems.

We regard *men* as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love. In affirming these principles we are aware of countering perhaps the dominant conceptions of man in the twentieth century: that he is a thing to be manipulated, and that he is inherently incapable of directing his own affairs. We oppose the depersonalization that reduces human beings to the status of things—if anything, the brutalities of the twentieth century teach that means and ends are intimately related, that vague appeals to “posterity” cannot justify the mutilations of the present.

We oppose, too, the doctrine of human incompetence because it rests essentially on the modern fact that men have been “competently” manipulated into incompetence—we see little reason why men cannot meet with increasing skill the complexities and responsibilities of their situation, if society is organized not for minority, but for majority, participation in decision-making.

Men have unrealized potential for self-cultivation, self-direction, self-understanding, and creativity. It is this potential that we regard as crucial and to which we appeal, not to the human potentiality for violence, unreason, and submission to authority. The goal of man and society should be human independence: a concern

not with image of popularity but with finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic; a quality of mind not compulsively driven by a sense of powerlessness, nor one which unthinkingly adopts status values, nor one which represses all threats to its habits, but one which has full, spontaneous access to present and past experiences, one which easily unites the fragmented parts of personal history, one which openly faces problems which are troubling and unresolved; one with an intuitive awareness of possibilities, an active sense of curiosity, an ability and willingness to learn.

This kind of independence does not mean egotistic individualism—the object is not to have one’s way so much as it is to have a way that is one’s own. Nor do we deify man—we merely have faith in his potential.

Human relationships should involve fraternity and honesty. Human interdependence is a contemporary fact; human brotherhood must be willed, however, as a condition of future survival and as the most appropriate form of social relations. Personal links between man and man are needed, especially to go beyond the partial and fragmentary bonds of function that bind men only as worker to worker, employer to employee, teacher to student, American to Russian.

Loneliness, estrangement, isolation describe the vast distance between man and man today. These dominant tendencies cannot be overcome by better personnel management, nor by improved gadgets, but only when a love of man overcomes the idolatrous worship of things by man. As the individualism we affirm is not egoism, the selflessness we affirm is not self-elimination. On the contrary, we believe in generosity of a kind that imprints one’s unique individual qualities in the relation to other men, and to all human activity. Further, to dislike isolation is not to favor the abolition of privacy; the latter differs from isolation in that it occurs or is abolished according to individual will.

We would replace power rooted in possession, privilege, or circumstance by power and uniqueness rooted in love, reflectiveness, reason, and creativity. As a social system we seek the establishment of a democracy of individual participation, governed by two central aims: that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation.

In a participatory democracy, the political life would be based in several root principles:

...that decision-making of basic social consequence be carried on by public groupings;

...that politics be seen positively, as the art of collectively creating an acceptable pattern of social relations;

...that politics has the function of bringing people out of isolation and into community, thus being a necessary, though not sufficient, means of finding mean-

ing in personal life;

...that the political order should serve to clarify problems in a way instrumental to their solution; it should provide outlets for the expression of personal grievance and aspiration; opposing views should be organized so as to illuminate choices and facilitate the attainment of goals; channels should be commonly available to relate men to knowledge and to power so that private problems—from bad recreation facilities to personal alienation—are formulated as general issues.

The economic sphere would have as its basis the principles:

...that work should involve incentives worthier than money or survival. It should be educative, not stultifying; creative, not mechanical; self-directed, not manipulated, encouraging independence, a respect for others, a sense of dignity, and a willingness to accept social responsibility, since it is this experience that has crucial influence on habits, perceptions and individual ethics;

...that the economic experience is so personally decisive that the individual must share in its full determination;

...that the economy itself is of such social importance that its major resources and means of production should be open to democratic participation and subject to democratic social regulation. Like the political and economic ones, major social institutions—cultural, educational, rehabilitative, and others—should be generally organized with the well-being and dignity of man as the essential measure of success.

In social change or interchange, we find violence to be abhorrent because it requires generally the transformation of the target, be it a human being or a community of people, into a depersonalized object of hate. It is imperative that the means of violence be abolished and the institutions—local, national, international—that encourage non-violence as a condition of conflict be developed.

These are our central values, in skeletal form. It remains vital to understand their denial or attainment in the context of the modern world.

THE STUDENTS

In the last few years, thousands of American students demonstrated that they at least felt the urgency of the times. They moved actively and directly against racial injustices, the threat of war, violations of individual rights of conscience, and, less frequently, against economic manipulation. They succeeded in restoring a small measure of controversy to the campuses after the stillness of the McCarthy period. They succeeded, too, in gaining some concessions from the people and institutions they opposed, especially in the fight against racial bigotry.

The significance of these scattered movements lies not in their success or failure in gaining objectives—at least, not yet. Nor does the significance lie in the intellectual “competence” or “maturity” of the students involved—as some pedantic elders allege. The significance is in the fact that students are breaking the crust of apathy and overcoming the inner alienation that remain the defining characteristics of American college life.

If student movements for change are still rarities on the campus scene, what is commonplace there? The real campus, the familiar campus, is a place of private people, engaged in their notorious “inner emigration.” It is a place of commitment to business-as-usual, getting ahead, playing it cool. It is a place of mass affirmation of the Twist, but mass reluctance toward the controversial public stance. Rules are accepted as “inevitable,” bureaucracy as “just circumstances,” irrelevance as “scholarship,” selflessness as “martyrdom,” politics as “just another way to make people, and an unprofitable one, too.”

Almost no students value activity as citizens. Passive in public, they are hardly more idealistic in arranging their private lives: Gallup concludes they will settle for “low success, and won’t risk high failure.” There is not much willingness to take risks (not even in business), no setting of dangerous goals, no real conception of personal identity except one manufactured in the image of others, no real urge for personal fulfillment except to be almost as successful as the very successful people. Attention is being paid to social status (the quality of shirt collars, meeting people, getting wives or husbands, making solid contacts for later on); much, too, is paid to academic status (grades, honors, the med school rat race). But neglected generally is real intellectual status, the personal cultivation of the mind.

“Students don’t even give a damn about the apathy,” one has said. Apathy toward apathy begets a privately constructed universe, a place of systematic study schedules, two nights each week for beer, a girl or two, and early marriage; a framework infused with personality, warmth, and under control, no matter how unsatisfying otherwise.

Under these conditions university life loses all relevance to some. Four hundred thousand of our classmates leave college every year.

The accompanying “let’s pretend” theory of student extracurricular affairs validates student government as a training center for those who want to live their lives in political pretense, and discourages initiative from the more articulate, honest, and sensitive students. The bounds and style of controversy are delimited before controversy begins. The university “prepares” the student for “citizenship” through perpetual rehearsals and, usually, through emasculation of what creative spirit there is in the individual.

The academic life contains reinforcing counterparts to the way in which extracurricular life is organized. The academic world is founded on a teacher-student relations analogous to the parent-child relation which characterizes *in loco parentis*. Further, academia includes a radical separation of the student from the material of study. That which is studied, the social reality, is “objectified” to sterility, dividing the student from life—just as he is restrained in active involvement by the deans controlling student government.

The specialization of function and knowledge, admittedly necessary to our complex technological and social structure, has produced an exaggerated compartmentalization of study and understanding. This has contributed to an overly parochial view, by faculty, of the role of its

research and scholarship; to a discontinuous and truncated understanding, by students, of the surrounding social order; and to a loss of personal attachment, by nearly all, to the worth of study as a humanistic enterprise.

There is, finally, the cumbersome academic bureaucracy extending throughout the academic as well as the extracurricular structures, contributing to the sense of outer complexity and inner powerlessness that transforms the honest searching of many students to a ratification of convention and, worse, to a numbness to present and future catastrophes. The size and financing systems of the university enhance the permanent trusteeship of the administrative bureaucracy, their power leading to a shift within the university toward the value standards of business and the administrative mentality. Huge foundations and other private financial interests shape the under financed colleges and universities, making them not only more commercial, but less disposed to diagnose society critically, less open to dissent. Many social and physical scientists, neglecting the liberating heritage of higher learning, develop "human relations" or "morale-producing" techniques for the corporate economy, while others exercise their intellectual skills to accelerate the arms race.

Tragically, the university could serve as a significant source of social criticism and an initiator of new modes and molders of attitudes. But the actual intellectual effect of the college experience is hardly distinguishable from that of any other communications channel—say, a television set—passing on the stock truths of the day. Students leave college somewhat more "tolerant" than when they arrived, but basically unchallenged in their values and political orientations.

With administrators ordering the institution, and faculty the curriculum, the student learns by his isolation to accept elite rule within the university, which prepares him to accept later forms of minority control. The real function of the educational system—as opposed to its more rhetorical function of "searching for truth"—is to impart the key information and styles that will help the student get by, modestly but comfortably, in the big society beyond.

THE SOCIETY BEYOND

Look beyond the campus, to America itself. That student life is more intellectual, and perhaps more comfortable, does not obscure the fact that the fundamental qualities of life on the campus reflect the habits of society at large. The fraternity president is seen at the junior manager levels; the sorority queen has gone to Grosse Pointe; the serious poet burns for a place, any place, to work; the once-serious and never-serious poets work at the advertising agencies. The desperation of people threatened by forces about which they know little and of which they can say less; the cheerful emptiness of people "giving up" all hope of changing things; the faceless ones polled by Gallup who listed "international affairs" fourteenth on their list of "problems" but who also expected thermonuclear war in the next few years; in these and other forms, Americans are in withdrawal from public life, from any collective effort at directing their own affairs.

Some regard these national doldrums as a sign of healthy approval of the established order—but is it approval by consent or manipulated acquiescence? Others declare that the people are withdrawn because compelling issues are fast disappearing—perhaps there are fewer bread lines in America, but is Jim Crow gone, is there enough work and work more fulfilling, is world war a diminishing threat, and what of the revolutionary new peoples? Still others think the national quietude is a necessary consequence of the need for elites to resolve complex and specialized problems of modern industrial society—but then, why should "business" elites help decide foreign policy, and who controls the elites anyway, and are they solving mankind's problems? Others, finally, shrug knowingly and announce that full democracy never worked anywhere in the past—but why lump qualitatively different civilizations together, and how can a social order work well if its best thinkers are skeptics, and is man really doomed forever to the domination of today?

There are now convincing apologies for the contemporary malaise. While the world tumbles toward the final war, while men in other nations are trying desperately to alter events, while the very future is uncertain—America is without community impulse, without the inner momentum necessary for an age when societies cannot successfully perpetuate themselves by their military weapons, when democracy must be viable because of its quality of life, not its quantity of rockets.

The apathy here is, first, *subjective*—the felt powerlessness of ordinary people, the resignation before the enormity of events. But subjective apathy is encouraged by the *objective* American situation—the actual structural separation of people from power, from relevant knowledge, from pinnacles of decision-making. Just as the university influences the student way of life, so do major social institutions create the circumstances in which the isolated citizen will try hopelessly to understand his world and himself.

The very isolation of the individual—from power and community and ability to aspire—means the rise of a democracy without publics. With the great mass of people structurally remote and psychologically hesitant with respect to democratic institutions, those institutions themselves attenuate and become, in the fashion of the vicious circle, progressively less accessible to those few who aspire to serious participation in social affairs. The vital democratic connection between community and leadership, between the mass and the several elites, has been so wrenched and perverted that disastrous policies go unchallenged time and again.

THE UNIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

There is perhaps little reason to be optimistic about the above analysis. True, the Dixiecrat-GOP coalition is the weakest point in the dominating complex of corporate, military, and political power. But the civil rights, peace, and student movements are too poor and socially slighted, and the labor movement too quiescent, to be counted with enthusiasm. From where else can power and vision be summoned? We believe that the universities are an overlooked seat of influence.

First, the university is located in a permanent position of social influence. It's

educational function makes it indispensable and automatically makes it a crucial institution in the formation of social attitudes. Second, in an unbelievably complicated world, it is the central institution for organizing, evaluating and transmitting knowledge. Third, the extent to which academic resources presently are used to buttress immoral social practice is revealed, first, by the extent to which defense contracts make the universities engineers of the arms race.

Too, the use of modern social science as a manipulative tool reveals itself in the “human relations” consultants to the modern corporations, who introduce trivial sops to give laborers feelings of “participation” or “belonging,” while actually deluding them in order to further exploit their labor. And, of course, the use of motivational research is already infamous as a manipulative aspect of American politics. But these social uses of the universities’ resources also demonstrate the unchangeable reliance by men of power on the men and storehouses of knowledge: this makes the university functionally tied to society in new ways, revealing new potentialities, new levers for change. Fourth, the university is the only mainstream institution that is open to participation by individuals of nearly any viewpoint.

These, at least, are facts, no matter how dull the teaching, how paternalistic the rules, how irrelevant the research that goes on. Social relevance, the accessibility to knowledge, and internal openness—these together make the university a potential base and agency in a movement of social change.

1. Any new left in America must be, in large measure, a left with real intellectual skills, committed to deliberativeness, honesty, reflection as working tools. The university permits the political life to be an adjunct to the academic one, and action to be informed by reason.

2. A new left must be distributed in significant social roles throughout the country. The universities are distributed in such a manner.

3. A new left must consist of younger people who matured in the postwar world, and partially be directed to the recruitment of younger people. The university is an obvious beginning point.

4. A new left must include liberals and socialists, the former for their relevance, the latter for their sense of thoroughgoing reforms in the system. The university is a more sensible place than a political party for these two traditions to begin to discuss their differences and look for political synthesis.

5. A new left must start controversy across the land, if national policies and national apathy are to be reversed. The ideal university is a community of controversy, within itself and in its effects on communities beyond.

6. A new left must transform modern complexity into issues that can be understood and felt close up by every human being. It must give form to the feelings of helplessness and indifference, so that people may see the political, social, and economic sources of their private troubles, and organize to change society. In a time of supposed prosperity, moral complacency, and political manipulation, a new left cannot rely on only aching stomachs to be the engine force of social reform. The case for change, for alternatives that will involve uncomfortable

personal efforts, must be argued as never before. The university is a relevant place for all of these activities.

But we need not indulge in illusions: the university system cannot complete a movement of ordinary people making demands for a better life. From its schools and colleges across the nation, a militant left might awaken its allies, and by beginning the process towards peace, civil rights, and labor struggles, reinsert theory and idealism where too often reign confusion and political barter. The power of students and faculty united is not only potential; it has shown its actuality in the South, and in the reform movements of the North.

The bridge to political power, though, will be built through genuine cooperation, locally, nationally, and internationally, between a new left of young people and an awakening community of allies. In each community we must look within the university and act with confidence that we can be powerful, but we must look outwards to the less exotic but more lasting struggles for justice.

To turn these mythic possibilities into realities will involve national efforts at university reform by an alliance of students and faculty. They must wrest control of the educational process from the administrative bureaucracy. They must make fraternal and functional contact with allies in labor, civil rights, and other liberal forces outside the campus. They must import major public issues into the curriculum—research and teaching on problems of war and peace is an outstanding example. They must make debate and controversy, not dull pedantic cant, the common style for educational life. They must consciously build a base for their assault upon the loci of power.

As students for a democratic society, we are committed to stimulating this kind of social movement, this kind of vision and program in campus and community across the country. If we appear to seek the unattainable, as it has been said, then let it be known that we do so to avoid the unimaginable.

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DIRECT DEMOCRACY PARTY PLATFORM

Suggested by Lee Gottlieb

January 2003

PREAMBLE

We, who gather under this banner of reform, represent the dreams and hopes, the anger and frustrations of millions of working U.S. citizens who are disillusioned with the American System, and disgusted with the performance of both major political parties: the Republican Party for its dedication to wealth, the Democratic Party for its prostitution to wealth.

Although Americans who support independent third parties are sincere in their commitments, should they win office we don’t believe the promises they make

can be kept under the present political environment, which is biased towards wealth and makes a mockery of the democratic processes.

We working Americans find ourselves confronted by a situation unknown in modern times: our democratic ideals and values are being distorted and our dreams of a better world for ourselves and our children are being destroyed by the actions of our own rulers who must do as they do to save their corrupt capitalist system and preserve their way of life.

Corruption saturates both our political and economic systems, and as a result of the 2000 Florida election fiasco, we now know that even the decisions of the Supreme Court can be swayed by the influence of wealth.

We can see that the mass media, subordinates or withholds important information, and we're told that many of our most talented journalists and writers are paid to deliberately slant news with cleverly written articles, and to fill the content of entertainment programs with half-truths and outright lies that favor the current policies and objectives of rich, powerful Americans.

We fear the elimination and weakening of federal programs designed to protect working Americans from the abuse of wealthy citizens as much as we fear the dismantling of the public school systems in favor of private or religious education. For we fear this goes hand in hand with the drive for secrecy by our unelected president and his Administration and the almost complete lack of open public debate on important national issues such as jobs, healthcare, justice, poverty, homelessness, and unnecessary wars. We fear the arrogance of such fascist policies are destroying whatever potential the republic had of ever evolving into a true democracy.

And so we have formed this political party to do what we believe is the only option left to the common working citizens of the republic—remove the power of the U.S. government from those who hold it and change the political system from one that responds to the influence of wealth to one that responds solely to the whole citizenry; from one that exclusively nurtures the needs and whims of wealthy, white, male citizens to one that nourishes the lives of all citizens.

PLATFORM

We declare:

First – the political form we advocate is a participatory, or direct, democracy in which all citizens of the U.S. have a voice in choosing the values, policies, and laws governing society, in which secret meetings concerning public decisions are against the law, and all such meetings are open to the public. It is to be a government in which every adult citizen is required to serve a specific period of time as administrator of local, regional, or national government, and every citizen shall be educated to perform such duties.

Second - once this new political system has been approved by the majority of the citizenry, and is in place and functioning comparatively well, this political party

shall dismantle and be no more, for a participatory government is totally reliant upon the energies of its individual citizens and has no need of intermediary political parties, which always seem to evolve needs of their own that conflict with the needs of the people.

Third – the objectives of this new government will be:

1. to utilize the natural resources of the nation in the nation's and the citizens' best interests. All citizens. Present and future. This objective necessitates the transference of all privately owned real property to public ownership with a fair payment to all legitimate owners of such properties—excluding land speculators.

2. to establish an economic system benefiting all citizens, not just rich citizens or speculators. Such a system will:

a – use the rental income from the nation's real estate to finance a national healthcare program, employment program, retirement program, insurance programs and all other programs passed by a majority vote of citizens after open, public discussion.

b – establish both public banking and credit systems.

c – to prevent the excessive accumulation of wealth and the power that goes with it, and to give as many citizens as possible an opportunity to benefit from the national economy, ownership of corporate conglomerates deemed essential to national security will be assumed by the people, and all other conglomerates will be dismantled into smaller, totally independent and unrelated companies. In conjunction with this policy, the economic system will restrict the amount of wealth an individual may remove from the economy in a lifetime.

3. establish an education system to promote the traits of curiosity, consideration, and cooperation between individuals, groups, and nations. Such a system will be designed to produce mature citizens capable of assuming the obligations of communal living and the responsibilities of a participatory democracy.

4. establish a national transportation system compatible with the environment. This would include:

a – research and development of alternative forms of energy and individual transport

b – construction of a national train system similar to that used in western Europe, and hopefully as efficient and dependable.

5. establish a legal system that delivers not only law and order, but justice for all.

6. reestablish public control of the airwaves so that the narrows of information to the public can never again fall under the control of so few men. This includes tighter control of the procedures and policies governing the licensing of all broadcasters, and the allocation of a greater segment of the airwaves to the public. It means the transference of all telephone systems to public ownership and free public access to the internet. It means the creation of an internet for the exclusive use of the business community and the exclusion of all commercial messages and

websites from the public internet.

7. reestablish the nation's tool and die industry and bring manufacturing back to this country, but only after a national dialog among the citizenry to make certain that every citizen understands the options and values involved. And only after a successful positive vote.

8. place the military under strong civil command and forbid American boys from overseas duties during peacetime.

All of these actions are designed to strengthen the security of the American people by eliminating the abuse that goes hand in hand with excessive wealth and power. They are designed to help produce a well-educated, mature citizenry capable of maintaining a participatory democracy.

It is understood that there will be many objections to such change, among which will be the dislocation involved as certain jobs are eliminated and others created. But in all instances the new political system will see that no American citizen is allowed to go hungry, homeless, or unemployed.

We end this political document as did the young student authors of the Port Huron Manifesto. "We are committed to stimulating this kind of social movement, this kind of vision and program in campus and community across the country. If we appear to seek the unattainable, as it has been said, then let it be known that we do so to avoid the unimaginable."

6

DIRECT DEMOCRACY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Suggested by Lee Gottlieb
January 2003

I pledge allegiance to all the citizens of America, and to the ideals and values that we hold in common: consideration, honesty, integrity, truth, justice for all, and respect for human life. I pledge to honor and protect their rights as citizens, as I expect them to honor mine. And I will do all in my power—always—to prevent war and promote peace.

7

ACTIVE HUMANIST CREED

By Lee Gottlieb

Active Humanism is a private belief. There are no group prayers or group rituals. The philosophy advocates the right of the individual to believe or not believe, and to behave accordingly.

It's a belief the species must learn to use the brain effectively for the common good or perish from this Earth; a belief the current selfish use of the brain for private wealth and power is destructive and can end only in disaster for the species and the planet; a belief the good life for all is here on planet Earth, if people actively and intelligently cooperate to secure it for all.

It's a belief change is the essence of life, and change, growth, and evolution are one and the same; a belief active energy lies at the core of change, and the controlled and directed use of human energy combined with conscious reason will produce positive physical and intellectual change.

It's a belief education is the catalyst to intellectual evolution and mature human behavior, and that conscious use of energy is crucial for the species to metamorphose from low, animal-level to high, human-level.

It's a belief in the Principle of the Greater-Force, belief cooperation between the majority of a people is the only way to fuse the Greater-Force, and a belief consideration for the needs of one another the only way to retain it.

It's a belief welfare is what a human society and government should be all about, for provision of the common welfare is why people have grouped together since the beginning of time.

It's a belief in the collective responsibility of society to ensure the welfare of each and every citizen, not merely rich citizens, white citizens, aggressive citizens, nor male citizens; a belief part of this responsibility is to guarantee each citizen access not only to the needs of survival, but also to a fair share of society's good things.

It's a belief people are born, live, and die just as other living forms; a belief life-after-death has never been proven to exist and it's foolish to base human behavior on the "faith" it does, when it's more likely it doesn't.

And because people have only one short lifespan to enjoy the good things of planet Earth and contribute to the species' welfare, it's a belief it is in society's best interest to ensure every citizen be given the opportunity to develop and become all he or she can become.

If the emotional support of a supernatural being is needed, Active Humanism could be considered a religion. But its sole relationship to supernaturalism is the belief that if there is a Creator, he, she, or it has endowed the human species with the brain as its major means of survival, and will offer no additional assistance to help an individual, or the species, to survive. Not ever!

It's a belief that only when such a philosophy as Active Humanism is held

by the majority of a nation's commoners can their society be transformed into a more equitable place for all.

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RELEVANT WEBSITES

Visiting any of the listed websites will give you an idea of citizen concerns about the direction our political leaders and corporate rulers take the republic. There are hundreds, if not thousands, more websites to be found on the internet.

DEMOCRACY

180 Movement for Democracy & Education	http://www.corporations.org/democracy
Active Humanists of America	http://www.acthum.net
Alliance for Democracy	http://www.afd-online.org
Center for Democracy and Technology	http://www.cdt.org
Center for Responsive Politics	http://www.crp.org
Committee for Direct Democracy	http://dawnpisturino.com
Center for Voting and Democracy	http://www.fairvote.org
Direct Democracy	http://info.acm.org/crossroads/xrds1
Direct Democracy Campaign	http://www2.prestel.co.uk/rodmell
Direct Democracy Center	http://www.realdemocracy.com
Direct Democracy Forum	http://ao.co.au/ddf
Direct Democracy in Switzerland	http://www.vote.org/swiss2.htm
Direct Democracy League	http://www.ddleague-usa.net
Freedom Rising	http://www.freedomrising.org/ direct_democracy
Global Democracy Movement	http://siyaset.bilkent.edu.tr/tann
<u>Liberal International</u>	http://www.liberal-international.org
Monkey Fist Direct Action	http://monkeyfist.com/articles/814
Movement for Direct Democracy	http://home.swpnet.se/~w-38823
National Voter Outreach	http://www.directdemocracy.com

Participatory Direct Democracy

Association	http://democracy.mkolar.org/pdda
Port Huron Manifesto	http://www.acthum.net/links/phm.htm
Vote.Org	http://www.vote.org

ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

Alternet	http://www.alternet.org
Civic Media Center	http://www.afn.org/~cmc
Disinformation	http://www.disinfo.com
Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting	http://ww.fair.org
Independent Media Center	http://www.indymedia.org
Media Whores Online	http://www.mediawhoresonline.com
Propaganda	http://carmen.artsci.washington.edu/ lpropaganda/contents.html
Rabble Rousers	http://www.rabble.ca
Z Magazine	http://www.zmag.org

CORPORATE ABUSE

50 Years Is Enough	http://www.50years.org
Corpwatch	http://www.corpwatch.org
Money in Politics	http://www.opensecrets.org
Stop the FTAA	http://stopftaa.org/new
Students Transforming and Resisting Corporations	http://www.corpreform.org/home.html
Whirled Bank Group	http://www.whiledbank.org
World Bank Boycott	http://www.econjustice.net
WTO Watch	http://www.tradeobservatory.org

ENVIRONMENT

Earthsave	http://www.earthsave.org
Global Warming	http://dieoff.org/page104.htm
Rainforest Action Network	http://www.ran.org
Union of Concerned Scientists	http://www.ucsusa.org

A THEORY OF SUBVERSION

HUMAN RIGHTS

ACLU Freedom Network	http://www.aclu.org
Human Rights Watch	http://www.hrw.org
Labor Net	http://www.igc.org/igc/labornet
Peace Net	http://www.igc.org/igc/peacenet
Public Citizen	http://www.citizen.org
International Women's Human Rights Links	http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/ diana/sites.htm
Just Response	http://www.justresponse.org

INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM

Initiative and Referendum Institute	http://www.iandrinstute.org
Philadelphia II	http://www.p2dd.org
United People	http://www.unitedpeople.org

Like the thornbird I have sung my song.

Has anyone heard?

ACTIVE HUMANISTS OF AMERICA

www.acthum.net

