DEEP GREEN RESISTANCE

STRATEGY TO SAVE THE PLANET

Aric McBay, Lierre Keith
& Derrick Jensen

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This abridged version has been optimized for reading on computers. There is another version available for mobile devices, and one for printing, on our website.

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Readers are encouraged to share it widely.

Thank you!

Preface

This is a book about fighting back. The dominant culture—civilization—is killing the planet, and it is long past time that those of us who care about life on earth began to take the actions necessary to stop this culture from destroying every living being.

By now we all know the statistics and trends: 90 percent of the large fish in the oceans are gone, there is ten times as much plastic as phytoplankton in the oceans, 97 percent of native forests are destroyed, 98 percent of native grasslands are destroyed, amphibian and fish populations are collapsing, and so on. Two hundred species are driven extinct each and every day. If we don't know those statistics and trends, we should.

This culture destroys landbases. That's what it does. When you think of Iraq, is the first thing that comes to mind cedar forests so thick that sunlight never touched

the ground? The Arabian Peninsula used to be oak savannah. The Near East, Greece and North Africa were heavily forested.

This culture destroys landbases, and it won't stop doing so because we ask nicely.

We don't live in a democracy. And before you gasp at this blasphemy, ask yourself: do governments better serve corporations or living beings? Does the judicial system hold CEOs accountable for their destructive, often murderous acts? Do the rich face the same judicial system as you or I? Does life on earth have as much standing in a court as does a corporation?

We all know the answers to these questions.

And we know in our bones, if not our heads, that this culture will not undergo any sort of voluntary transformation to a sane and sustainable way of living.

If you care about life on this planet, and if you believe this culture won't voluntarily cease to destroy it, how does that belief affect your methods of resistance?

Most people don't know, because most people don't talk about it.

This book talks about it: this book is about that shift in strategy, and tactics.

This book is about fighting back.

We must put our bodies and our lives between the industrial system and life on this planet. We must start to fight back. Those who come after, who inherit whatever's left of the world once this culture has been stopped—whether through peak oil, economic collapse, ecological collapse, or the efforts of brave women and men resisting in alliance with the natural world—are going to judge us by the health of the landbase, by what we leave behind. They're not going to care how we lived our lives, how hard we tried, or whether we were nice people. They're not going to care whether we were enlightened, or how we voted, or what sort of excuses we had to not act.

They're going to care whether they can breathe the air and drink the water. We can fantasize all we want about some great turning, but if the people (including the nonhuman people) can't breathe, it doesn't matter.

Every new study reveals that global warming is happening far more quickly than was previously anticipated. Staid scientists are now suggesting the real possibility of billions of human beings being killed off by what some are calling a Climate Holocaust. A recently released study suggests an increase in temperatures of sixteen degrees Celsius (30 degrees Fahrenheit) by the year 2100.

We are not talking about this culture killing humans, and indeed the planet, sometime in the far distant future. This is the future that children born today will see, and suffer, in their lifetimes.

Honestly, is this culture worth more than the lives of your own children?

How do you stop global warming that is caused in great measure by the burning of oil and gas? If you ask any reasonably intelligent seven-year-old, that child should be able to give you the obvious answer. But if you ask any reasonably intelligent thirty-five-year-old who works for a green high-tech consulting corporation, you'll probably receive an answer that helps the corporation more than the real, physical world.

When most people in this culture ask, "How can we stop global warming?" they aren't really asking what they pretend they're asking. They are instead asking, "How can we stop global warming without stopping the burning of oil and gas, without stopping the industrial infrastructure, without stopping this omnicidal system?" The answer: you can't.

Here's yet another way to look at this: What would we do if space aliens had invaded this planet, and they were vacuuming the oceans, and scalping native forests, and putting dams on every river, and changing the climate, and putting dioxin and dozens of other carcinogens into every mother's breast milk, and into the flesh of your children, lover, mother, father, brother, sister, friends, into your own flesh? Would you resist? If there existed a resistance movement, would you join it? If not, why not? How much worse would the damage have to get before you would stop those who were killing the planet, killing those you love, killing you?

Ninety percent of the large fish in the oceans are already gone. Where is your threshold for resistance? Is it 91 percent? 92? 93? 94? Would you wait till they had killed off 95 percent? 96? 97? 98? 99? How about 100 percent? Would you fight back then?

By asking these questions we are in no way implying that people should not try to work within the system to slow this culture's destructiveness. Right now a large energy corporation, state and federal governments, local Indian nations, and various interest groups (from environmental organizations to fishermen to farmers) are negotiating to remove five dams on the Klamath River within the next fifteen years (whether salmon will survive that long is dubious). That's something. That's important.

But there are two million dams in the United States alone; 60,000 of those dams are taller than thirteen feet, and 70,000 are taller than six feet. If we only took out one of those 70,000 dams per day, it would take us 200 years. Salmon don't have that time. Sturgeon don't have that time.

If salmon could take on human manifestation, what would they do?

This book is about fighting back.

And what do we mean by fighting back? As we'll explore in this book, it means first and foremost thinking and feeling for ourselves, finding who and what we love, and figuring out how best to defend our beloved, using the means that are appropriate and necessary. The strategy of Deep Green Resistance (DGR) starts by acknowledging the dire circumstances that industrial civilization has created for life on this planet. The goal of DGR is to deprive the rich of their ability to steal from the poor and the powerful of their ability to destroy the planet. It also means defending and rebuilding just and sustaina-

ble human communities nestled inside repaired and restored landbases. This is a vast undertaking but it needs to be said: it can be done. Industrial civilization can be stopped.

People routinely approach each of this book's writers—Aric, Lierre, and Derrick—and tell us how their hope and despair have merged into one. They no longer want to do everything they can to protect the places they love, everything, that is, except the most important thing of all: to bring down the culture itself. They want to go on the offensive. They want to stop this culture in its tracks. But they don't know how.

This book is about creating a culture of resistance. And it's about creating an actual resistance. It's about creating the conditions for salmon to be able to return, for songbirds to be able to return, for amphibians to be able to return.

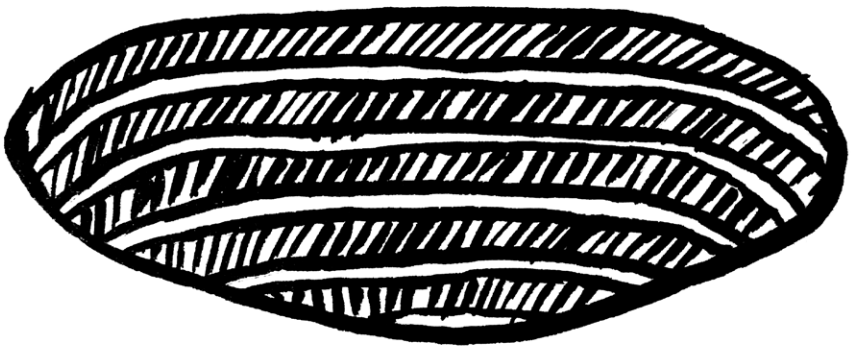
This book is about fighting back.

And this book is about winning.

It is simply true that direct actions against strategic infrastructure is a basic tactic of both militaries and insurgents the world over for the simple reason that it works. But such actions alone are never a sufficient strategy for achieving a just outcome. This means that any strategy aiming for a just future must include a call to build direct democracies based on human rights and sustainable material cultures, which means that the different branches of these resistance movements must work in tandem: the aboveground and belowground, the militants and the nonviolent, the frontline activists and the cultural workers. We need it all.

And we need courage. The word "courage" comes from the same root as couer, the French word for heart. We need all the courage of which the human heart is capable, forged into both weapon and shield to defend what is left of this planet. And the lifeblood of courage is, of course, love.

So while this is a book about fighting back, in the end this is a book about love. The songbirds and the salmon need your heart, no matter how weary, because even a broken heart is still made of love. They need your heart because they are disappearing, slipping into that longest night of extinction, and the resistance is nowhere in sight. We will have to build that resistance from whatever comes to hand: whispers and prayers, history and dreams, from our bravest words and braver actions. It will be hard, there will be a cost, and in too many implacable dawns it will seem impossible. But we will have to do it anyway. So gather your heart and join with every living being. With love as our First Cause, how can we fail?



Chapter 1

The Problem

We live in a period of mass extinction, with the numbers standing at 200 species per day. This culture is oblivious to their passing. This extermination is called the *Holocene extinction event*, caused by human behavior, behavior that we could choose to stop. Only zero emissions can prevent a warmer planet. James Lovelock, originator of the Gaia hypothesis, states that global warming has passed the tipping point, carbon offsetting is a joke, and individual lifestyle adjustments are a deluded fantasy. If burning fossil fuels will kill the planet, then burning them needs to stop.

The moment policy makers and environmental groups start offering solutions is the moment they stop telling the truth. The solutions offered—such as cloth shopping bags, travel mugs, and misguided dietary advice—will do

exactly nothing to disrupt the troika of industrialization, capitalism, and patriarchy that is skinning the planet alive. Even if every American took every single action suggested by Al Gore, it would only reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 21 percent.

Industrialism itself is what has to stop. There is no kinder, greener version that will leave a living planet. Industrialization is a process of taking entire communities of living beings and turning them into commodities and dead zones. If it were done more efficiently, or stretched out another twenty years, the planet still dies. Trace every industrial artifact back to its source and you find the same devastation: mining, clear-cuts, dams, agriculture. And now tar sands, mountaintop removal, wind farms. No amount of renewables is going to make up for the fossil fuels, or change the destructive nature of the extraction, both of which are prerequisites for this way of life. Neither fossil fuels nor extracted substances can ever be sustainable; by definition they will run out.

Any social system based on the use of nonrenewable resources is by definition unsustainable. Any culture based on the nonrenewable use of renewable resources is just as unsustainable. Trees are renewable, but if we use them faster than they can grow, the forests will turn to desert. Which is precisely what civilization has been doing for its 10,000 year campaign, running through soil, rivers, and forests as well as metal, coal and oil. Now the oceans are almost dead and their plankton populations are collapsing, populations that both feed the life of the oceans and create oxygen for the planet. In parts of the Pacific, plastic outweighs plankton 48 to 1.

Imagine if it were your blood, your heart, crammed with toxic materials—not just chemicals, but physical gunk—until there was ten times more of it than you. The oceans need action. They need industrial civilization to stop destroying and devouring. They need us to make it stop.

The word sustainable serves as an example of the worst tendencies of the alternative culture. To doubt the vague promise that we can have our cars, our corporations, our consumption, and our planet, too, is both treason and heresy to the emotional well-being of most progressives. But do we want to feel better, or do we want to be effective?

We must embrace and then defend the bare truth: the planet is primary. The life-producing work of millions of species is literally the earth, air and water that we depend on. No human activity, or human life, is worth more than that.

The vast majority of the population will do nothing unless they are led, cajoled, or forced. If the structural determinants are in place for people to live without doing damage—for example, if they're hunter-gatherers with respected elders—then that's what will happen. If, on the other hand, the environment has been arranged for cars, industrial schooling, war taxes, giant corporate enterprises, and misogynist pornography—well, welcome to the nightmare.

But wherever there is oppression there is resistance. The resistance is built body by body from a tiny few who are willing to stand against both power and social censure. It is our prediction that there will be no mass movement, not in time to save this planet, our home.

Theoretically, the human race as a whole could face our situation and make some decisions, including an equitable distribution of both resources and justice that respects and embraces the limits of our planet. But none of the institutions that govern our lives, from the economic to the religious, are on the side of justice or sustainability. These institutions could be forced to change, but it takes time.

The usual approach of long, slow institutional change has been foreclosed. The default setting for environmentalists has become personal lifestyle "choices." This should have been predictable, as it merges perfectly with capitalism. We can't consume our way out of environmental collapse; consumption is the problem. Lifestyle change is not a solution as it doesn't address the root of the problem. We have believed such ridiculous solutions because our perception has been blunted by some portion of denial and despair, and because everyone around us insists they're workable.

So this is the moment when you will have to decide. Do you want to be part of a serious effort to save this planet? Not a serious effort at collective delusion, not a serious effort to feel better, not a serious effort to save you and yours, but an actual strategy to stop the destruction of everything worth loving. If your answer feels as imperative as instinct, read on.

Chapter 2

Civilization and other Hazards

We're up against a culture that destroys entire landbases. The Aral Sea, the prairies of the American West, and the ancient forests of the Middle East are just three examples. At this point it's much harder to find a biome that hasn't been destroyed. In some places, those in power are just getting started. The boreal forests of northern Alberta are being scraped away to extract the tar sands beneath, and water is drained from nearby rivers to wash the bitumen out of the sand, leaving a toxic by-product that kills fish, birds, and indigenous people living in the area. This culture is an ecological serial-killer, and it's long past time for us to recognize the pattern.

The crises facing the planet do not stem from human nature, but from the mode of social and political organization we call civilization. What do we need to know about civilization to defeat it?

It is globalized. Civilization spans the globe, and is integrated infrastructurally and economically. Any local resistance effort faces an opponent with global resources, so effective strategies must be enacted around the world.

It is mechanized. An industrial civilization requires machines for production. Mechanization has centralized political and economic power, created a dramatic population spike (through industrial agriculture), and global ecological devastation (through industrial fishing, logging, and extraction). Most humans are now dependent on industrial "production," while the system itself is dependent on finite minerals and fossil fuels.

It is very young on cultural, ecological, and geological timescales. Civilized history spans a few thousand years, human history several millions, and ecological history several billions. But since much traditional knowledge has been lost or destroyed in order to glorify civilization, we have the impression that civilization is as old as time.

It is primarily an urban phenomenon. Civilizations emerge from and promote the growth of cities. Cities create pools of workers who, crowded together and severed from land, must labor to survive. Urban areas are densely surveilled and policed, and are epicentres of strife when civilizations fall.

It employs an extensive division of labor and high degree of social stratification. Specialization increases production, but a narrow focus prevents most people from making systemic criticisms of civilization. Social stratification keeps power centralized, and maintains an underclass to perform undesirable labor.

It is militarized. Civilizations are intensely competitive. As anthropologist Stanley Diamond wrote, "Civilization originates in conquest abroad and repression at home." Glorification of the military causes people to identify with the state, and advertises the consequences of fighting back.

It is patriarchal and exalts masculinity. Civilization systematically oppresses women and celebrates the masculine expression of power and violence.

It is based on large-scale agriculture. Only intensive, large-scale agriculture can provide the 'surplus' to support cities. Historical agriculture was dependent on slavery and cruelty. Industrial agriculture depends upon petroleum, an arrangement that will not last.

It is predicated on perpetual growth. Settlement requires agriculture, which results in population growth and militarized elites who control the resources, and begins to overburden and destroy the local landbase.

It is characterized by short-term thinking. The structure of civilization rewards those who think in the short term and those who take more than they give back. But because you cannot win by taking more from the land than it gives willingly, they must lose in the long term.

Its history is defined by collapse. Throughout history, civilizations have either collapsed or been conquered.

It is hierarchical and centralized, both politically and infrastructurally. Superficially, global power is held by a number of different national governments; those governments are mostly in the thrall of a corporate capitalist elite.

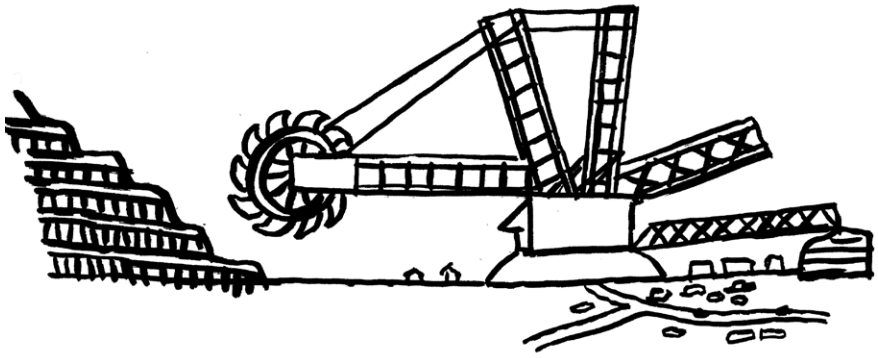
The corollary of the centralization of power is the externalization of consequences (such as destroying the planet). The poor and nonhumans are made to experience those consequences so the wealthy can remain comfortable.

Hierarchy and centralization result in increasing regulation of behavior and increasing regimentation.

As a means of enforcing hierarchy and centralization, civilization also makes major investments in monumental architecture and propaganda, in the form of advertising, television programs, superstores and megamalls.

It requires large amounts of human labor, and is based on either compelling that labor directly or systematically removing feasible livelihood alternatives. Civilization perpetuates itself by producing deliberate conditions of scarcity and deprivation.

It is capable of making Earth uninhabitable for humans and the majority of living species. Historical civilizations self-destructed before causing global damage, but global industrial civilization has been far more damaging than its predecessors. We no longer have the option of waiting it out. There is nowhere left to go. Civilization will collapse one way or another, and it's our job to insure that something is left afterward.



Industrial practices that are toxic or incompatible with life

Global warming is caused by the burning of fossil fuels, as well as other industrial activities and land destruction. Models predict a temperature increase of up to 11.5°F during the twenty-first century. Catastrophic weather events could happen frequently. The effects of greenhouse gas emissions are delayed, so we are only now experiencing the effects of decades-old emissions. Even if emissions stopped immediately, existing gases would contribute to global warming for at least one thousand years. As tundra melts, methane is released, causing drastic climate changes that will damage many such biomes, and release more carbon. Global warming becomes self-sustaining. NASA says a tipping point that would lead to "disastrous effects" will be reached by 2017, but for many species and cultures on or past the brink of extinction, it has already been reached.

Pollution. Researchers at Cornell University blamed 40 percent of all human deaths on water, air, and soil pollution. Death by pollution is not quick or painless, but a drawn-out descent. The burden of ecocide is felt most by the poor. Industry is the main pollution culprit.

Twenty-four hours after the Northeast Blackout of 2003 began, sulphur dioxide levels dropped 90 percent. Persistent organic pollutants, however, accumulate and biomagnify in body fat, and endure for centuries. This crisis requires immediate action.

Centralization of power and externalization of consequences. To continue the expansion of capitalism and resource extraction, those in power must destroy traditional, land-based cultures and increase social control. About half of all languages are endangered. The pay ratio between the CEO and the average American worker has grown from 42:1 in 1992, to 525:1 by the year 2000, and continues to increase. Women do two-thirds of global work, earn 10 percent of wages, and own less than 1 percent of wealth. We can make similar observations about race and class. In 2007 some 57 percent of people were malnourished, up from 20 percent in 1950.

This wealth and well-being gap is partly a by-product of the mantra of profit-at-any-cost, but also from deliberate attempts to harm or impoverish, so that marginalized people are less able to mount resistance against occupation and resource extraction. International policies like structural adjustment programs (SAPs) force poor countries to cut government spending, sell public lands and enterprises to private corporations, and remove labor and environmental policies that restrict the generation of profit. SAPs dramatically increase poverty and inequality. Poor countries of the world pay about $4 million in debt per hour. Meanwhile, the US spends $58 million on the military each hour, almost as much as all other countries combined.

Drawdown is the use of resources faster than they can be replaced. The most crucial substances to industrial society and human life—soil, water, cheap energy, food stocks—are exactly those being drawn down most rapidly. The use of drawdown is a dead-end approach.

Cheap oil undergirds every aspect of industrial society. Peak oil is already causing disruption in societies around the world, with cascading effects on everything from food production to the global economy. No industrial renewables are adequate substitutes. The effects of peak oil are mostly beneficial: reduced burning of fossil fuels, decreased consumption, a shift toward organic food growing, stronger communities, and so on. The worst effects of peak oil will be secondary—caused by the response of those in power. Mass slavery, gulags, and the like are common in pre-industrial civilizations. You get the idea.

Industrial civilization is heavily dependent on many different finite resources, which makes its goal of perpetual growth impossible. Upgrading the infrastructure in the "developing world" to the status of the "developed world" would require all the copper and zinc in the Earth's crust.

The growing global food crisis is a confluence of economic, political and ecological factors. Plenty of food is being produced, but for economic reasons isn't being distributed fairly. The longer humanity waits before switching to sustainable (small scale and ecologically diverse) food sources, and reversing population growth, the greater the disparity will be between carrying capacity and population.

The food crisis is tied to two other ecological crises: *water drawdown and soil loss and desertification.* Industrial water consumption is drying up rivers and swallowing entire aquifers. Topsoil is being lost at ten to twenty times the rate at which it can be replenished. Desertification is caused by overcultivation, deforestation, overgrazing, and climate change. About 30 percent of Earth's land surface is at risk of desertification, including 70 percent of all drylands.

Overfishing has caused 90 percent of large fish in the oceans to be wiped out. Industrial fishing continues to take more fish each year. All oceanic fish stocks worldwide are estimated to collapse by 2050.

Deforestation. Fully half of mature tropical forests have been wiped out globally. Some of the hardest hit being: the Philippines, with 90 percent forest loss; Haiti, 99 percent; and Nigeria, 80 percent. Hundreds of thousands of species have been lost. The rate of deforestation correlates with the rate of economic growth. Deforestation may cause a self-perpetuating cycle of drought that ends in the world becoming uninhabitable.

The media report on these crises as though they are all separate issues. They are not. They are inextricably entangled with each other and with the culture that causes them. As such, all of these problems have im-

portant commonalities, with major implications for our strategy to resist them. These problems are urgent, severe, and worsening, and the most worrisome hazards share certain characteristics:

- They are progressive, not probabilistic. These problems are getting worse. They aren't hypothetical, projected, or mere possibilities; they are well underway and will continue to worsen.

- They are rapid, but not instant. These crises arose rapidly, but not quickly enough to trigger a prompt response. People get used to them, a phenomenon called the "shifting baselines syndrome."

- They are nonlinear, and sometimes runaway or self-sustaining. The hazards get worse over time and often in unpredictable ways.

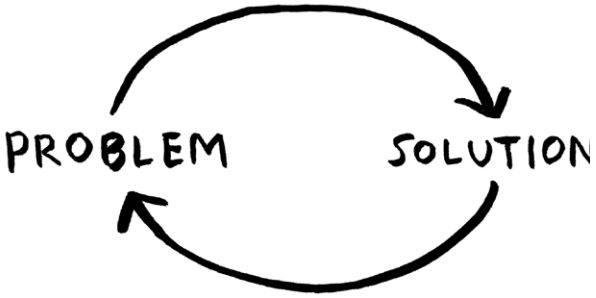
- They have long lead or lag times. These problems are often caused long before they become a visible issue.

- They have deeply rooted momentum. These crises are rooted in the most fundamental practices and infrastructure of civilization.

- They are industrially driven. Industry is the prime culprit in virtually all of these problems.

- They provide benefits to the powerful and costs to the powerless.

- They facilitate temporary victories and permanent losses. No successes we might have are guaranteed to last as long as industrial civilization stands.



Proposed "solutions" often make things worse. For example, biofuels, embraced by some as a perfect ecological replacement for petroleum, are driving the destruction of tropical rainforest in the Amazon and South East Asia.

The hazards do not result from any single program. They tend to result from the underlying structure and essential nature of civilization, not from any particular industry, technology, government, or social attitude.

- They may reinforce existing power disparities. Virtually any solution based on corporate capitalism is likely to fall into this criterion. When Monsanto genetically engineers a plant to require less pesticides, they're not doing it to help the planet—they're doing it to make money, and so increase their power.

- They suppress autonomy or sustainability. Any solution that requires those in power to act against their own self-interest will almost undoubtedly be ineffective.

- They rely primarily on technofixes or technological and political elites. For example, photovoltaic solar panels are suggested as a solution, but making those panels requires more industry and doesn't address root causes.

- They encourage increasing consumption and population growth. More consumption cannot be the solution to problems caused by consumption.

- They attempt to solve one problem without regard for other problems. The result of this is often more destruction. For example, using ethanol as a replacement for oil would require more land for industrial agriculture, and worsen soil and water drawdown.

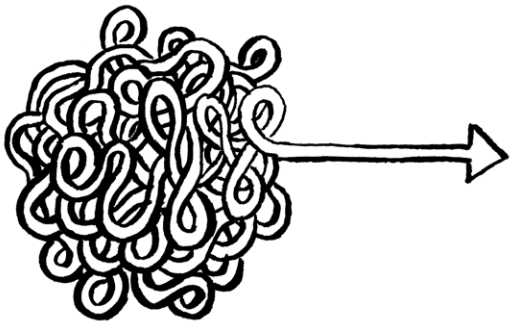
- They involve great delays and postpone action into the distant future—for example, voluntary emissions reductions with a target date of 2050. Each day means more sustainable cultures destroyed, more species rendered extinct, more tipping points passed, more permanent losses.

- They focus on changing individual lifestyles. Our problems are primarily of a systemic, not individual, nature. Lifestyle solutions encourage people to think of themselves as consumers, rather than as human beings, and members of living communities.

- They are primarily based on token, symbolic, or trivial actions, and a superficial approach. They result from an acknowledgment of the fact that industrial civilization is destroying the world, but a refusal to accept the full implications of this problem.

- They focus on superficial or secondary causes, rather than the primary causal factor. An example is the focus that some people have on overpopulation. Damage caused by humans is primarily the result of overconsumption, not overpopulation.

In general, the worst shortcoming of most suggested solutions is that they are not consonant with the severity of the problem, the window of time available for effective action, or the number expected to act. If we wanted to back the idea that the solution to a problem like global warming is for everyone to voluntarily stop using fossil fuels, then we would have to reasonably believe that this is a plausible scenario. Unfortunately, it is not.



In contrast, effective (or at least, more effective) solutions are likely to share a different set of characteristics:

- They address root problems, and include long-term view of our situation and a long-term plan.

- They should involve a higher level of strategic rigor, deriving from tangible strategy that proposes a plan of action from point A to point B.

- They enable many different people to work toward addressing the problem.

- They are suitable to the scale of the problem. If we can only expect a small number of people to take serious action, then our plans must only require a small number of people.

- They involve immediate action AND planning for future long-term action. Crises like global warming cannot be addressed too soon. The most immediate action should target the worst contributors to each hazard, and happen as soon as possible.

- They make maximum use of available levers and fulcrums, which is to say, they play to our strengths and take advantage of the weaknesses of those who are trying to destroy the world.

- And ultimately, of course, effective solutions must directly or indirectly work toward *taking down civilization*.

Chapter 3

Liberals and Radicals

Can it be done? Can industrial civilization be stopped? Theoretically, any institution built by humans can be taken apart by humans. That seems obvious as a concept. But in the here and now, in the time frame left to our planet, what is feasible?

Here the left diverges. The Faithful insist that with new technology, individual consumer choices, and hope as a moral duty, Everything Will Be Okay. Meanwhile, methane is escaping from both land and sea where up until now it was sequestered by being frozen. This could lead to a catastrophic warming, meaning a planet too hot for life—any life, all life. Yes, we can kill the planet. One of the cardinal differences between liberals—those who insist that Everything Will Be Okay—and the truly radical is in their conception of the basic unit of society. Liberals believe that a society is made up of individuals. But for radicals, society is made up of classes (economic

ones in Marx's original version) or any groups or castes. In the radical's understanding, identifying with a group is the first step toward political consciousness and ultimately effective political action to win justice.

But classical liberalism was the founding ideology of the US, and the values of classical liberalism—for better and for worse—have dispersed around the globe. The original founding fathers of the United States were not after a human rights utopia. They were merchant capitalists waging a rebellion against the king and the landed gentry of England. They wanted to take the king and the aristocrats out of the social hierarchy, so that the flow of power went: God –> property owners. When they said "All men are created equal," they meant very specifically white men who owned property. That property included black people, white women, and more generally, the huge pool of laborers who were needed to turn this continent from a living landbase into private wealth.

This new class had a new set of priorities in the service of their god-given right to accumulate wealth. The West has had market economies for thousands of years; they are essential to feeding civilization. Goods have to be traded, first from the countryside, then from the colonies (and there are always colonies) to fill the ever-growing needs of the bloated power base.

Those original market economies in the West, and, indeed, around the world, were nestled inside a moral economy informed by community networks of care, concern, and responsibilities. Property owners and money-lenders were restricted by community norms and the influence of extra-legal leaders like elders, healers, and religious officers. This social world was held together by personal bonds of affection and mutual obligation.

These were precisely the bonds that the rising capitalist class needed to destroy. Their concept of freedom meant freedom from those obligations and responsibilities. In their schema, individuals were free from traditional moral and community values, as well as from the king and landed gentry, to pursue their own financial interests. What held this social world together wasn't bonds of affection and obligation, but impersonal contracts—and impersonal contracts favored the rich, the employers, the landlords, the owners, and the creditors while dispossessing the poor, the employees, the tenants, the slaves, and the debtors.

Groups of people don't endure oppression without some of them fighting back. This is true everywhere, no matter what. There were huge and fertile populist movements in America at that time, with visions for a true democracy that have yet to be equaled. Between 1675 and 1700, militant confrontations brought down governments in Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. By 1760 there had been eighteen rebellions aimed at overthrowing colonial governments, six Black rebellions, and forty major riots. People knew who their enemies were—most of them had been literally owned by the rich. Nobody was taken in by the government that the merchant barons were proposing.

What the merchant barons wanted was a centralized national government with the ability to coercively suppress internal dissent movements, regulate trade, protect private property, and subsidize infrastructure that would drive the economy. What they ultimately wanted was to gut a vast, living continent and turn it into wealth, and they didn't want anyone to get in their way.

That's the trajectory this culture has been on for 10,000 years, since the beginning of agriculture. The only thing that has changed is who gets to benefit from that gutting.

We need to understand the contradictory legacy of liberalism to understand the left today. Any political idea that can bring down theocracy, monarchy, and religious fundamentalism is worth considering, but any ideology that impedes a radical transformation of other equally violent systems of power needs to be rigorously examined and ultimately rejected.

Classical liberalism values the sovereignty of the individual, and asserts that economic freedom and property rights are essential to that sovereignty. John Locke, called the Father of Liberalism, made the argument that the individual instead of the community was the foundation of society. He believed that government existed by the consent of the governed, not by divine right. But the reason government is necessary is to defend private property, to keep people from stealing from each other. This idea appealed to the wealthy for an obvious reason: they wanted to keep their wealth. From the perspective of the poor, things look decidedly different. The rich are able to accumulate wealth by taking the labor of the poor and by turning the commons into privately-owned commodities, thus defending the accumulation of wealth in a system that has no other moral constraints is in effect defending theft, not protecting against it.

According to classical liberalism, government needs to refrain from any participation in the economic realm, beyond the enforcement of contracts. The government must not interfere in arenas like speech and religion in

order to guarantee liberty to individual citizens. In the real world, what this means is: if you have the power, you get to keep it. If you own the press or have the money to access it, you're free to "say" whatever you like. If you can't access it, well, the government can't interfere. The vast majority of citizens thus have no right to be heard in any way that is socially meaningful. This is how classical liberalism increased the rights of the powerful against the rights of the dispossessed.

From the beginnings of classical liberalism, liberals have embraced capitalism. Hence, unlike in Europe, there is no real left in the US, as a true left starts with the rejection of capitalism. Congress is essentially filled with the two wings of the Capitalist Party.

At this moment, the liberal basis of most progressive movements is impeding our ability, individually and collectively, to take action. The individualism of liberalism, and of American society generally, renders too many of us unable to think clearly about our dire situation.

Liberalism also diverges from a radical analysis on the question of the nature of social reality. Liberalism is idealist. This is the belief that reality is a mental activity. Oppression, therefore, consists of attitudes and ideas, and social change happens through rational argument and education. Materialism, in contrast, is the understanding that society is organized by concrete systems of power, not by thoughts and ideas, and that the solution to oppression is to take those systems apart brick by brick. This in no way implies that individuals are exempt from examining their privilege and behaving

honorably. It does mean that anti-racism workshops will never end racism: only political struggle to rearrange the fundamentals of power will.

Today, many of capitalism's most vocal defenders argue that victimization somehow is a benefit to the victims: indigenous people and subsistence farmers want to "develop" (oddly enough, at the point of a gun); many men argue that women "want it" (oddly enough, at the point of a gun); foresters argue that forests (who existed on their own for thousands of years) benefit from their management. With power removed from the equation, victimization looks voluntary, which erases the fact that it is, in fact, social subordination.

While liberals consider it an insult to be identified with a class or group, they further believe that such an identity renders one a victim. Note that within this liberal mindset it's not the actual material conditions that victimize—it's naming those unjust conditions in an attempt to do something about them that brings the charge of victimization. But radicals insist on naming the man behind the curtain, on analyzing who is doing what to whom as the first step to resistance.

The final difference between liberals and radicals is in their approaches to justice. Since power is rendered invisible in the liberal schema, justice is served by adhering to abstract principles. For instance, in the United States, First Amendment absolutism means that hate groups can actively recruit and organize since hate speech is perfectly legal. The principle of free speech outweighs the material reality of what hate groups do to real human people.

For the radicals, justice cannot be blind; concrete conditions must be recognized and addressed for anything to change. Domination will only be dismantled by taking away the rights of the powerful and redistributing social power to the rest of us.

Once some understanding of oppression is gained, most people are called to action. There are four broad categories of action: legal remedies, direct action, withdrawal, and spirituality. These categories can overlap in ways that are helpful or even crucial to resistance movements; they can also be diversions that dead-end in despair. Crucial to our discussion, none of them are definitively liberal or radical as actions.

LEGAL REMEDIES

Most activist groups are centered around legal remedies to address specific harms. This is for a very good reason. As Catharine MacKinnon points out, "Law organizes power." Much of this activism is inherently reformist, but if we would like to organize power in an egalitarian distribution, we will need to grapple with the law. The trick is to do to this as radicals, which means asking the questions: Does this initiative redistribute power, not just change who is at the top of the pyramid? Does it take away the rights of the oppressors and reestablish the rights of the dispossessed? Does it let people control more of the material conditions of their lives? Does it name and redress a specific harm?

This is not a call to behave and ask nicely. I believe in breaking the law because the edifice is supported by a federal constitution that upholds a corrupt arrangement

of power. We have no moral obligation to respect it; quite the opposite. But there are legislative victories and court rulings—like the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Roe v. Wade—that have changed people's lives in substantive ways, redirecting the flow of power toward justice. Structural change needs to happen. How best to force that change is a strategic question.

DIRECT ACTION

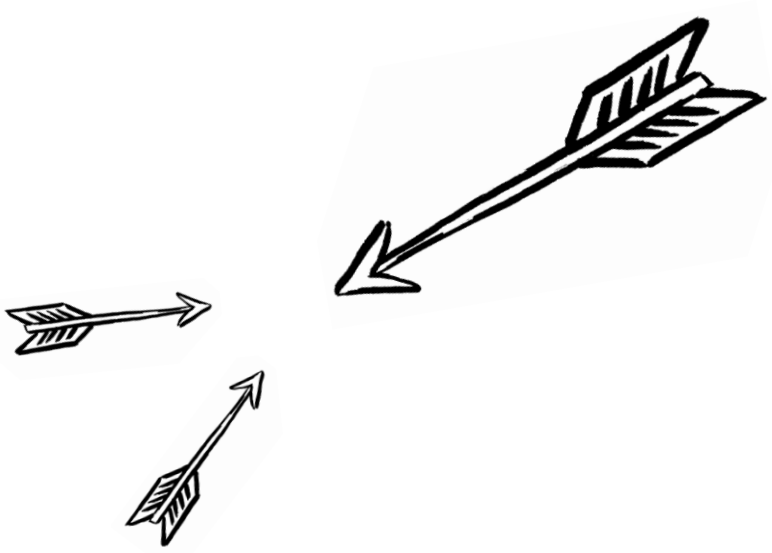
Other activist groups bypass the legislative arena and focus on direct action. As with legal remedies, the goal of direct action can be liberal or radical.

No single action, whether "inside" or "outside" whatever system of power, is going to be definitive. A successful movement aims at wherever power is vulnerable compared to the resources at hand. The "inside" and the "outside" actionists need to see themselves as working together toward that larger goal. Both are needed.

The most militant strategy is not necessarily the most radical. I don't say this from a moral attachment to nonviolence. Many militant groups are an excuse for men to wallow in the cheap thrill of the male ego unleashed from social constraints through bigger and better firepower: real men use guns. Combined with ineffective

strategic goals, and often rabidly masculinist behavioral norms, these groups can implode when the men start shooting each other. Michael Collins was shot by other Irish nationalists, Trotsky by Stalinist goons, and Malcolm X by other Black Muslims. Leftist revolutions that used violence have often empowered a charismatic dictator and the next round of atrocities. Allowing violence to be directed by the wrong hands does nothing to bring down an oppressive system, and, indeed, reinscribes the system called patriarchy.

"Violence" is a broad category and we need to be clear what we're talking about so that we can talk about it as a movement. Wherever you personally fall on the issue of violence, it is vital to understand and accept its potential usefulness in achieving our collective goals.



Violence of Hierarchy vs. Violence of Self-Defense

The violence of hierarchy is the violence that the powerful use against the dispossessed to keep them subordinated. This type of violence has defined every im-

perialist war in the history of the US that has been fought to get access to "natural resources" for corporations to turn into the cheap consumer goods that form the basis of the American way of life. The powerful have armies, courts, prisons, taxation and media on their side. The entire structure of global capitalism runs on violence (Violence: The Other Fossil Fuel?). The violence used by the powerful to keep their hierarchy in place is one manifestation that we can probably agree is wrong.

In contrast stands the violence of self-defense, a range of actions taken up by people being hurt by an aggressor. Everyone has the right to defend her or his life or person against an attacker.

Violence against property vs. violence against people

Some people reject that violence is the correct word to describe property destruction. Destroying property can be done without harming a single sentient being and with great effect to stop an unjust system. Can anyone really argue against the French resistance blowing up railroad tracks and bridges to stop the Nazis?

But violence against property can also be an act meant to intimidate. Whatever we decide to call property destruction, we need to weigh the consequences and strategic benefits and make our decisions from there. We need to acknowledge the distinction between people and property when we discuss violence.

Violence as self-actualization vs. violence for political resistance

Male socialization is basic training for life in a military hierarchy. The psychology of masculinity is the psychology required of soldiers, demanding control, emotional distance, and a willingness and ability to dominate.

With male entitlement comes a violation imperative: men become men by breaking boundaries, whether it's the sexual boundaries of women, the cultural boundaries of other peoples, the physical boundaries of other nations, the genetic boundaries of species, or the biological boundaries of ecosystems.

The concern that taking up violence could potentially be individually and culturally dangerous is a valid one. But violence is a broad category of action; it can be wielded destructively or wisely. We can build a resistance movement and a supporting culture in which atrocities are always unacceptable; in which penalties for committing them are swift and severe; in which violence is not glorified as a concept but instead understood as a specific set of actions that we may have to take up, but that we will also set down to return to our communities. We need our combatants to be of impeccable character for our public image, for the efficacy of our underground cells, and for the new society we're trying to build.

Only people with a distaste for violence should be allowed to use it. Empowering psychopaths or reinscribing the dominating masculinity of global patriarchy are mistakes we must avoid.

A very simple question to ask as we collectively and individually consider serious actions like property destruction is, is this action tactically sound? Does it advance our goal of saving the planet? Or does it simply answer an emotional need to do something, to feel something?

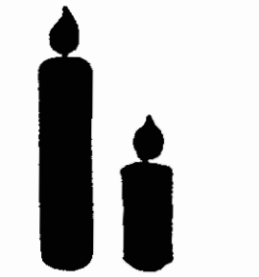
WITHDRAWAL

Entire social enclaves are filled with people whose goal is not to make broad-based social or political change, but to live "authentically." We can see the potential problem with this strategy in some synonyms for the word "withdrawal": "abandonment, abdication, disengagement, marooning, resignation, retirement." On the other end of the spectrum is withdrawal used as a political tactic, targeting specific economic, political, or social practices or institutions.

The main difference between withdrawal as a successful strategy and withdrawal as a failed strategy is whether the withdrawal is linked to political resistance or instead seen as adequate in itself. The withdrawal has got to go beyond the intellectual, the emotional, and the psychological to include a goal of actually winning justice. Living in a rarified bubble-world of the converted is a poor substitute for freedom—and such a world will certainly not save the planet.

Daniel Quinn explains in a very accessible way why civilization is unsustainable and based on exploitation. The main strategy he proposes, however, is withdrawal, which he calls "walking away." To where? Well, there's no actual place that he has in mind, but rather a state of mind.

I have heard variations on this position repeated everywhere: we can't kill the planet; species loss is regrettable but inevitable; the best we can do is learn about permaculture so that me and mine might have some food when the crash arrives. I find this position morally reprehensible at a level that can't be argued, only mourned. Surely somewhere in the human heart empathy, loyalty, and love are still alive. We can aim higher than a goal of simply creating really great gardens.



SPIRITUALITY

We have got to think past our emotional needs. Faith-based solutions can't stand up to intellectual scrutiny. When questioned, the adherents feel threatened and and must retreat to the protection of repeatable platitudes and the reassuring company of like-minded others. This is the stance taken across much of the progressive community.

The spiritual approach of the alternative culture is damaging to our movement. Instead of guiding people to face the hard reality of oppression and environmental destruction, and giving them the emotional and spiritual support to wage a resistance struggle, it offers a range of other-worldly events and characters, such as the Age of Aquarius, the Second Coming of Christ, and the end of the Mayan Calendar, who will save the planet.

There is a role for our spiritual longings and for the strength that a true spiritual practice can bring to social movements. But no spirit warriors have ever appeared to save the day, and no amount of prayer can stop the harrow of oppression. The only miracle we're going to get is us.

The four main categories of action discussed here—legal initiatives, direct action, withdrawal, and spirituality—can be taken up by either liberals or radicals. It's the ultimate goal that will dictate their strategic use, and it's the goal that's either liberal or radical.

The left has often operated on the smug or sentimental belief that nonviolence works only by personal, moral example. It doesn't. Systems of power are not swayed by moral exhortation. Nonviolent actionists have been gunned down in cold blood, tortured, thrown in jail to rot. Nonviolence does not work by persuasion, nor does it offer protection, and the left needs to give up its maudlin belief in both. Those are not the reasons to employ it.

Nonviolence works by using direct action to interrupt the flow of power and hopefully dislodge some portion of its foundation. Instead of weapons, the technique uses people, usually large numbers of people willing to commit direct confrontations with power, which means they risk getting killed.

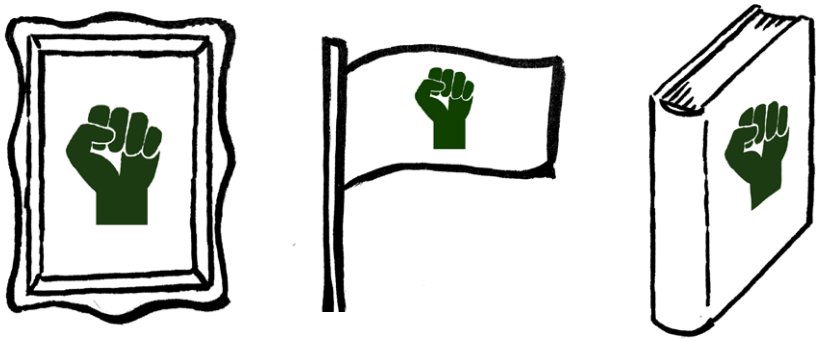
Forms of withdrawalism are another popular offer from the left. This especially includes individual, personal "growth." How you feel will not change the world. Replacing one consumer choice with another is an act of almost no impact. There are no individual solutions to political problems. At their worst, these attempts hijack the very real concern and despair of anyone who's even half awake, offering a deeply delusional sense of hope.

We need to think institutionally, not personally. Alternative institutions like local food networks, communal childcare, nonindustrial schooling, direct democracy, and community-based policing and justice are essential to both a culture of resistance and to post-carbon survival.

Spirituality, the last category of action we discussed, has played a strong role in many social change movements. In contrast, the hyper-individualism of "inner peace" as a final goal offers nothing but moral and political disengagement. Second, a spirituality of resistance provides a connection to something way bigger than ourselves, that can lead us out of our personal pain, loss, and exhaustion, and lend us the courage and strength to fight for justice.

A serious strategy to save this planet has to consider every possible course of action. To state it clearly once more: our planet is dying. There could not be a greater call to responsibility than stopping the destruction of all life.

So can it be done? Can industrial civilization be stopped? Theoretically, it's not that difficult. Industrialization is dependent on very fragile infrastructure. It requires vast quantities of fossil fuel, which come from relatively few places, enter through a small number of centralized ports and processing facilities, and then have to be transported out along vulnerable supply lines, including the interstate highway system. Industrial civilization is utterly dependent on electricity, and the electric grid is a million fragile miles long. The system is also dependent on the Internet; globalization would not be possible without it to organize and transfer both information and capital. And finally there is capital itself, which flows every day through twenty major stock markets—a finite number indeed. A small number of people could directly target that infrastructure; a few more, willing to persist, could potentially bring it down.



Chapter 4

Culture of Resistance

The culture of the left needs a serious overhaul. At our best and bravest moments, we are the people who believe in a just world; who fight the power with all the courage and commitment that women and men can possess; who refuse to be bought or beaten into submission, and refuse equally to sell each other out. The history of struggles for justice is inspiring, ennobling even, and it should call us to redouble our efforts now when the world entire is at stake. Instead, our leadership is leading us astray. There are historic reasons for the misdirection of many of our movements, and we would do well to understand those reasons before it's too late.

The history of misdirection starts in the Middle Ages when various alternative sects arose across Europe, some more strictly religious, some more politically utopian. Among these were the Adamites, who wanted to

achieve a state of primeval innocence from sin, and the Diggers (True Levelers) who argued for an egalitarian social structure based on small agrarian communities that embraced ecological principles.

Not all dissenting groups had a political agenda. Many alternative sects rejected material accumulation and social status but lacked any clear political analysis or egalitarian program. Such subcultures have repeatedly arisen across Europe.

This perennial trend of critique and utopian vision was bolstered by Romanticism, a cultural and artistic movement that began in the latter half of the eighteenth century in Western Europe. It was at least partly a reaction against the Age of Enlightenment, which valued rationality and science. The image of the age was the machine, with the living cosmos reduced to clockwork. As the industrial revolution gained strength, rural lifeways were destroyed while urban areas swelled with suffering and squalor. Blake's dark, Satanic mills destroyed rivers, the commons of wetlands and forests fell to the highest bidder, and coal dust was so thick in London that the era could easily be deemed The Age of Tuberculosis.

The Romantic Movement revolved around three main themes: longing for the past, upholding nature as pure and authentic, and idealizing the heroic and alienated individual. Germany, where elements of an older pagan folk culture still carried on, was in many ways the center of the Romantic movement.

Another current of Romanticism that eventually influenced our current situation was bolstered by philosopher Jean Jacques Rosseau, who described a "state of nature" in which humans lived before society developed. He popularized one of the core components that would coalesce into the cliché of the noble savage, arguing that there was a fundamental rupture between human nature and human society. The concept of such a divide leaves cultures that aren't civilizations out of the circle of human society. With the idea of a state of nature, vastly different societies are collapsed into an image of the "primitive," which exists unchanging outside of history and human endeavor.

Indeed, one offshoot of the Romantic Movement was an artistic movement called Primitivism that inspired its own music, literature, and art. Primitivism saw European culture as overly rational and repressive of natural impulses. So-called "primitive" cultures, in contrast, were cast as emotional, innocent and childlike, sexually uninhibited, and at one with the natural world. The image is an objectifying, condescending, and racist

construct bearing no relation to the vast variety of forms that indigenous human cultures have taken. Culture is a series of choices—political choices made by a social animal with moral agency.

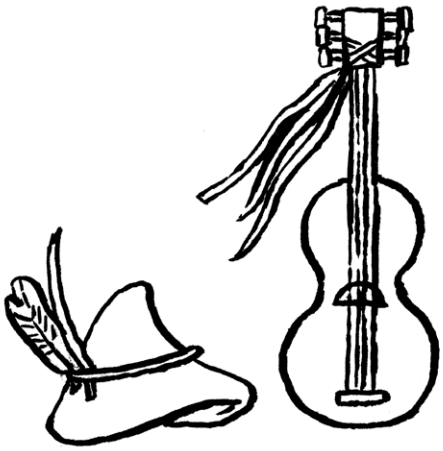
The Romantic Movement tapped into some very legitimate grievances. Urbanism is alienating and isolating. Industrialization destroys communities both human and biotic. The conformist demands of hierarchical societies leave our emotional lives inauthentic and numb, and a culture that hates the animality of our bodies drives us into exile from our only homes. The realization that none of these conditions are inherent to human existence or to human society can be a profound relief. Further, the existence of cultures that respect the earth, that give children kindness instead of public school, that share food and joy in equal measure, that might even have mystical technologies of ecstasy, can serve as both an inspiration and as evidence of the crimes committed against our hearts, our culture, and our planet. But the places where Romanticism failed still haunt the culture of the left today and must serve as a warning if we are to build a culture of resistance that can support a true resistance movement.

In Germany, the combination of Romanticism and nationalism created an upswell of interest in myths. They spurred a widespread longing for an ancient or even primordial connection with the German landscape. German youth in the late nineteenth century coalesced into their own counterculture. They were called Wandervogel or wandering spirits, and started as part of the Lebensreform (life reform) movement. This social movement emphasized physical fitness and natural health,

experimenting with a range of alternative modalities like homeopathy, natural food, herbalism, and meditation. The Lebensreform created its own clinics, schools, and intentional communities, all variations on a theme of re-establishing a connection with nature. The Wandervogel embraced the natural in opposition to the artificial: rural over urban, emotion over rationality, sunshine and diet over medicine, spontaneity over control. Environmental ideas were a fundamental part of these movements. Nature as a spiritual source was fundamental to the Romantics and a guiding principle of Lebensreform.

Alternative communities soon sprang up all over Europe. The small village of Ascona, Switzerland, became a countercultural center between 1900 and 1920. Social change—indeed, revolution—was one of the ideas on the table at Ascona. This chaos of alternative spiritual, cultural, and political trends began to make its way to the US. The connections between the Lebensreform, Wandervogel youth, and the 1960s counterculture in the US are startlingly direct.

Before we turn to the 1960s, it's important to examine what happened to the Lebensreform and Wandervogel in Germany with the rise of Nazism. This is not easy to do. 1900s Germany was a tumult of change and ideas, pulling in all directions. There was a huge and politically powerful socialist party which helped usher in the first parliamentary democracy, including universal suffrage, and brought a shorter work day, legal workers' councils in industry, and a social safety net. To these serious activists, working-class and poor people concerned with survival and justice, the almost entirely middle class Wandervogel and Lebensreform were fringe movements.



Here we begin to see these utopian ideas take a sinister turn. The ideas of the politically ambivalent Lebensreform were harnessed by the right, and ultimately incorporated into Nazi ideology. Lebensreform activities like hiking and eating whole-grain bread were seen as strengthening the political body and were promoted by the Nazis. Meanwhile, Jews, gays and lesbians, the mentally ill, and anarchists were seen as "diseases" that weakened the Germanic race as a whole.

Ecological ideas were likewise embraced by the Nazis. The health and fitness of the German people—a primary fixation of Nazi culture—depended on their connection to the health of the land, a connection that was both physical and spiritual.

Our contemporary environmental movement has much to learn from this history. Janet Biehl and Peter Staudenmaier in their book, Ecofascism: Lessons from the German Experience, explore the idea that fascism or other reactionary politics are "perhaps the unavoidable trajectory of any movement which acknowledges and opposes social and ecological problems but does not recognize their systemic roots or actively resist the political and economic structures which generate them. Eschewing societal transformation in favor of personal change...can yield barbaric results."

Fascism in the US is most likely to come from actual right-wing ideologues. But we need to take seriously the history of how ideas which we think of as innately progressive, like ecology and animal rights, became intertwined with a fascist movement.

An alternative culture built around the project of an individualistic and interior experience, whether spiritual or psychological, cannot create a resistance movement, no matter how many societal conventions it trespasses. There is no firm moral ground under the feet of those who can only counsel withdrawal and personal comfort in the face of atrocity.

The living world is now perishing in a bloody, senseless pile of daily species. If the largest segment of us remain apolitical and apathetic, they will all surely die.

This is the history woven through the contemporary alternative culture. It takes strands of the Romantics, the Wandervogel, and the Lebensreform, winds through the Beatniks and the hippies, and splits into a series of subcultures. There is a set of accumulated ideas and behavioral norms that are barely articulated and yet hold sway across the left. It is my goal here to fully examine these currents so we may collectively decide which are useful and which are detrimental to the culture of resistance.

For the purposes of this discussion, I've set "alternative culture" against "oppositional culture," although in real life, many of these norms and behaviors form a continuum along which participants move with relative ease.

Alternative Culture	Oppositional Culture
Apathetic-to-hostile to concept of political engagement	Consciously embraces resistance
Change seen in psychological and cultural terms	Change seen in economic and political terms
Individual consciousness is the target	Concrete institutions are targeted
Adolescent values of youth movement	Adult values of discernment, responsibility
All authority is rejected out of hand	Legitimate authority is accepted and cultivated
Rejection of moral judgment	Strong moral code based on universal human rights
Attack on conventions - all boundaries fair game - shock value	Attacks on power structures
Alienated individual valorized	Loyalty and solidarity valued
Goal is to feel intense, "authentic," unmediated emotions	Goals are adult concerns: guide the community, socialize the young, enforce norms, participate in larger project of righting the world

Alternative Culture	Oppositional Culture
A politics of emotion in which feeling states outweigh effective strategy or tactics	A politics of community that values responsibility, mutual aid, work ethic—dependent on self-regulation of mature adults
Politics is who you are	Politics is what you do
Human relations are corrupted in the act of political resistance; only right consciousness can prevail	Human relations are corrupted by systems of power and oppression; justice must prevail even if it takes generations
Generalized withdrawal as strategy	Withdraw loyalty from systems of oppression and the oppressors, but active engagement to stop injustice
Moral vigor of youth cut off from action - horizontal hostility, - questions of in group/ out group	Idealism tempered by experience
Cultural appropriation	- Cultural reclamation and protection (oppressed group) - Cultural respect, political solidarity (allies)

Way too many potential activists, lacking neither courage nor commitment, are lost in confusion. It's in the hope that we are collectively capable of something better that I offer these criticisms.

This focus on individual change is a hallmark of liberalism. It comes in a few different flavors, yet the commonality of individualism puts all of these subgroups on a continuum. It starts with the virulently anti-political dwellers in workshop culture; only individuals (i.e., themselves) are a worthy project and only individuals can change. The continuum moves toward more social consciousness to include people who identify oppression as real but still earnestly believe in liberal solutions, mainly education, psychological change, and "personal example." It ends at the far extreme where personal lifestyle becomes personal purity and identity itself is declared a political act. This would include such divergent groups as vegans, lesbian separatists, and anarchist rewilders. They would all feel deeply insulted to be called liberals. But if the only solutions proposed encompass nothing larger than personal action—and indeed political resistance is rejected as "participation" in an oppressive system—then the program is ultimately liberal, and doomed to fail, despite the clarity of the analysis and the dedication of its adherents.

Where the alternative culture exists to create personal change, the oppositional culture exists to nurture a serious movement for political transformation of the institutions that control society. It understands that concrete systems of power have to be dismantled, and that such a project will require tremendous courage, commitment, risk, and potential loss of life.

As you can see there is a split to the root between the Romantics and the resistance, a split that's been present for centuries. The differences have been obscured by two victories of liberalism: the conflation of personal change with political change, and the broad rejection of real resistance.

For the alternative culture—the inheritors of the Romantic movement—the enemy is a constraining set of values and conventions, usually cast as bourgeois. Their solution is to "create an alternative world within Western society" based on "exaggerated individualism." The heroization of the individual forms the basis of the Romantic hostility to the political sphere. "The radical's program of social and economic change was rejected because it did nothing to free the human spirit."

The beatniks were the inheritors of this tradition, but they were a small social phenomenon, and didn't blossom into the hippies until the demographics of both the baby boom and the middle class provided the necessary alienated youth in the 1960s.

The youth origin of the alternative culture is crucial to understanding it. The alternative culture as we know it is largely a product of the adolescent brain.

To begin with, the prefrontal cortex (PFC) isn't utilized in an adolescent brain to the extent that it will be by an adult brain. The PFC is "responsible for planning ahead, considering consequences, and managing emotional states." As well, a person's ability to judge time is not fully developed until age twenty-one. Adolescents literally cannot understand cause and effect or long-term consequences the way an adult can.

The ventral striatal circuit is responsible for motivation and it goes inactive during adolescence. Hormonal fluctuations are another factor that can create an amplification of emotional intensity, leading to the risk taking, impulsive behavior, anger, and overall emotionality of the teen years.

It's the role of parents and their stand-ins in the larger culture to provide the guidance, support, and structure to help young people toward adulthood. This has been an important task of functioning communities for thousands of years: to raise the next crop of adults.

Beyond the biology of the teen brain is the psychology of adolescence. Psychologist Erik Erikson says that the biggest task of those years is identity formation. It is the time when the question of Who I Am takes on an intensity and importance that will likely never be matched again.

But this is where the counterculture—a product of adolescent biology and psychology—has been permanently stuck. The concerns of adolescence are the framework for the alternative culture. Its main project is the self, its exploration, and its expression, to the point where many adherents are actively hostile to political engagement. One common version of this is a concession that some kind of social change is necessary, but that the only thing we can change is ourselves. Thus injustice becomes an excuse for narcissism. As one former activist explained, "I got to the point where I couldn't just advocate for political change, I had to live it. Change isn't something up there, out there...it's in here."

John Lennon and John Hoyland debated the conflict between individual and social change in a public exchange of letters in 1968. Lennon argued by defending the lyrics to "Revolution."

You say you'll change the constitution, well, you know, we all want to change your head.

You tell me it's the institution, well, you know, you better free your mind instead.

To which Hoyland replied, "What makes you so sure that a lot of us haven't changed our heads in something like the way you recommend—and then found out it wasn't enough, because you simply cannot be turned on and happy when you know kids are being roasted to death in Vietnam?"

The endless project of the self is fine for people who are fifteen, as long as they are surrounded by a larger community of adults who can provide the structure for the physical and psychological developments that need to happen to produce a mature individual. But anyone past adolescence should be assuming her or his role as an

adult: to provide for the young and the vulnerable, and to sustain and guide the community as a whole. For a culture of resistance, these jobs are done with the understanding that resistance is primary in whatever tasks our talents call us to undertake.

Radical groups have their own particular pitfalls. The first is in dealing with hierarchy, both conceptually and practically. The rejection of authority is another hallmark of adolescence, and this knee-jerk reactivity filters into many political groups. This approach leads to an insistence on consensus at any cost and often a constant meta-discussion of group power dynamics. It also unleashes "critiques" of anyone who achieves public acclaim or leadership status. These critiques are usually nothing more than jealousy camouflaged by political righteousness. It's often accompanied by a hyper-analysis of the victim's language use or personal lifestyle choices. There is a reason that the phrase "politically correct" was invented on the left.

There's a name for this trashing. Florynce Kennedy called it "horizontal hostility." It can reach a feeding frenzy of ugly gossip and character assassination. It may take the form of paranoid accusations. In the worst instances, it ends with men shooting each other. If the only thing we can change is ourselves or if the best tactics for social change are lifestyle choices, then, indeed, examining and critiquing the minutiae of people's personal lives will be cast as righteous activity. And if you're not going to fight the people in power, the only people left to fight are each other. This behavior leaves friendships, activist circles, and movements in shreds.

To be viable, a serious movement needs a supportive culture. Successful cultures of resistance are able to develop healthy norms of behavior and corresponding processes to handle conflict. But a youth culture by definition doesn't have that cache of experience, and it never will.

A culture of resistance also needs the ability to think long term. Movements for serious social change take a long time. But a youth movement will be forever delinked from generations.

The gift of youth is its idealism and courage, which has been a prime force in social movements across history. For instance, when the suffragist Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) embraced arson as a tactic, it was primarily very young women who arranged perilous expeditions, and set fire to untenanted buildings. It's overwhelmingly the young who are willing and able to undertake these kinds of physical risks.

During the Oka crisis, in which Mohawk people protected their burial ground from being turned into a golf course, the elders—with their fully-functioning prefrontal cortexes—frequently stepped between the youth and trouble, telling them to calm down and back away. Without the warriors, the blockade never would have happened; without the elders, it's likely there would have been a massacre.

Serious movements need a steady supply of idealism that the young provide. The psychological task of middle age is to remember that idealism against the rough wear of disappointment. Adulthood also brings responsibilities

such as children, and caring for aging parents. And then there's the activist's own basic survival needs, the demands of shelter, food, healthcare. But the older people need the young to bring idealism and courage to the movement.

The transition from one generation to the next, and an increase in confrontational tactics, is rarely smooth. The older activists may try to obstruct the young. It often splits movements. But it is more or less inevitable. The overall pattern is one we should be aware of so we can work with it rather than struggling against it. We have to find a way to build a serious movement despite our differences.

In a youth culture, political wisdom never accumulates, and the young are never socialized into a true culture of resistance. No culture can exist without community norms based on responsibility to each other and some accepted ways to enforce those norms.

Currently there are young people emboldened by a desperate fearlessness, ready to take up militance, yet they have no guidance and no support. The countercultures of the Romantics, the Wandervogel, the hippies—created by youth—have stranded our young.

While the alternative culture "celebrates political disengagement," what it attacks are conventions, morals, and boundaries. It comes down to a simple question: are we after shock value or justice? Is the problem a constraining set of values or an oppressive set of material conditions? Remember that one of the cardinal points of liberalism is that reality is made up of values and ideas, not relationships of power and oppression. So not only is shock value an adolescent goal, it's also a liberal one.

This program of attacking boundaries rather than injustice has had serious consequences on the left, and to the extent that this attack has won, across popular culture as a whole. When men decide to be outlaw rebels, from Bohemians to Hell's Angels, one primary "freedom" they appropriate is women. The Marquis de Sade, who tortured women, girls, and boys—some of whom he kidnapped, some of whom he bought—was declared "the freest spirit that has yet existed" by Guillaume Apollinaire, the founder of the surrealist movement. Women's physical and sexual boundaries are seen as just one more middle-class convention that men have a right to overcome on their way to freedom. Nowhere is this more apparent—and appalling—than in the way so many on the left have embraced pornography.

The triumph of the pornographers is a victory of power over justice, cruelty over empathy, and profits over human rights. I could make that statement about Walmart or McDonalds and progressives would eagerly agree. Nobody defends Walmart by saying that the workers, American or Chinese, want to work there. No one defends what McDonalds does to animals, to the earth, to workers, to human health and human community by pointing out that the people standing over the boiling grease consented to sweat all day or that hog farmers voluntarily signed contracts that barely return a living. The issue does not turn on consent, but on the social impacts of injustice and hierarchy, on how corporations are essentially weapons of mass destruction. Focusing on the moment of individual choice will get us nowhere.

The problem is the material conditions that make going blind in a silicon chip factory in Taiwan the best option for some people.

And the woman enduring two penises shoved up her anus? "Double-anal" is now standard fare in gonzo porn, the porn that men overwhelmingly prefer. The average woman in gonzo porn can only last three months before her body gives out, and is likely to suffer permanent physical damage. In the words of Robert Jensen, "[I]f we have the courage to look honestly at contemporary pornography, we get a glimpse—in a very visceral, powerful fashion—of the consequences of the oppressive systems in which we live. … Imagine a world in which empathy, compassion, and solidarity—the things that make decent human society possible—are finally and completely overwhelmed by a self-centered, emotionally detached pleasure-seeking. Imagine those values playing out in a society structured by multiple hierarchies in which a domination/subordination dynamic shapes most relationships and interaction. … what happens when people can no longer see the cruelty, when the pleasure in cruelty has been so normalized that it is rendered invisible to so many? And what happens when for some considerable part of the male population of our society, that cruelty becomes a routine part of sexuality, defining the most intimate parts of our lives?"

All leftists need to do is connect the dots, the same way we do on every other instance of oppression. The material conditions that men as a class create (the word is patriarchy) mean that in the US battering is the most commonly committed violent crime: that's men beating

up women. Men rape one in three women and sexually abuse one in four girls before the age of fourteen. Andrea Dworkin, one of the bravest women of all time, understood that this was systematic, not personal. She saw that rape, battering, incest, prostitution, and reproductive exploitation all worked together to create a "barricade of sexual terrorism" inside which all women are forced to live. Our task is to bring that wall down.

The pornographers have built a $100 billion a year industry, selling not just sex as a commodity, which would be horrible enough for our collective humanity, but sexual cruelty. Male supremacy takes acts of oppression and turns them into sex.

On a global scale, the naked female body is for sale everywhere. Women and girls are now the number one product for sale on the global black market. Indeed, there are entire countries balancing their budgets on the sale of women. Is slavery a human rights abuse or a sexual thrill? Of what use is a social change movement that can't decide?

We need to stake our claim as the people who care about freedom, not the freedom to abuse, exploit, and dehumanize, but freedom from being demeaned and violated, and from a cultural celebration of that violation.

If the left wants to mount a resistance against the power that breaks hearts and bones, rivers and species, it will have to hear—and, finally, know—this one brave sentence from poet Adrienne Rich: "Without tenderness, we are in hell."

The alternative culture of the 60s offered a generalized revolt against structure, responsibility, and morals. A rejection of all structure and responsibility ends ultimately in atomized individuals motivated only by self interests, which looks rather exactly like capitalism's fabled Economic Man. And a flat out refusal of the concept of morality is the province of sociopaths. This is not a plan with a future.

Given the ugliness and the authoritarianism of the right's "family values", it's no surprise that the left has ceded all claim to morality. But we have values, too. War, poverty, and extinction are moral issues. Unrestricted personal license in a context that abandons morals to celebrate outrage will not inspire a movement for justice, nor will it build a culture worth living in. For the entitled individual, pleasure is reduced to cheap thrills, while the deepest human joys—intimacy, belonging, participation from community to cosmos—are impossible. This is because those joys depend on a realization that we need other people and other beings, ultimately a whole web of existence, all of whom deserve our protection and respect.

The US is dominated by corporate rule. The Democrats and Republicans are really the two wings of the Capitalist Party. Neither is going to critique the masters. It is up to us, the people who hold human rights and our living planet dear above all things, to speak the truth. We need to rise above individualism and live in the knowledge that we are the only people who are going to defend what is good in human possibility against the destructive overlapping power-grab of capitalism, patriarchy, and industrialization.

We can begin by picking up the pieces of community and civic life in the US. People of my parent's generation are correct to mourn the loss of community trust and participation that they once experienced.

Corporations have managed to coerce a huge percentage of the population to abandon the values and behaviors that make people happy—to act against our own interests by instilling in us a new mythos and a set of compulsive behaviors. Clearly, there is an intense short-term pleasure capturing people, because the long-term losses are tremendous. The most chilling studies link television to teen depression, eating disorders, and suicide. As a culture, we are actively handing over the young to be socialized by corporate America into a set of values that are essentially amoral. The average child will spend 2,000 hours with her parents and 40,000 hours with the mass media. Children need to experience bonding or they will end up with personality disorders as narcissists, borderlines, and sociopaths. They must learn basic values like compassion, generosity, and duty to become functioning members of society.

The job of a parent is to socialize the young. Until recently, parents and children were nestled inside a larger social system with the same basic values taught at home. Now, parents are being told to "protect" their kids from the culture at large—a task that cannot be done. If the culture is so toxic that we can't entrust our children to it, we need to change the culture.

The values taught by the mass media encourage the worst in human beings. If people are commodities and objects, neither intimacy nor community are possible.

People surrounded by a culture of mass images experience themselves and the world as depersonalized, distant, and fractured. This is the psychological profile of PTSD. Add to that the sexual objectification and degradation of those images, and you have girls presenting with PTSD symptoms with no history of abuse. The culture itself has become the perpetrator.

Again, the right does not have a monopoly on values. We can reject authoritarianism, conformity, social hierarchy, anti-intellectualism, and religious fundamentalism. We can defend equality, justice, compassion, intellectual engagement, civic responsibility, and even love against the corporate jihad. We have to.

The final difference between the alternative culture and a culture of resistance is the issue of spirituality. The Romantic Movement upheld Nature as an ideal and mourned a lost "state of nature" for humans. The Wandervogel idealized medieval peasants, but did not live among them, or take up political issues on their behalf.

When the subculture was transplanted to the US, the real exploitation was saved for Native Americans and African Americans. The appropriation of Native Ame-

rican religious practices has become so widespread that in 1993 elders issued a statement, "The Declaration of War Against Exploiters of Lakota Spirituality." White people helping themselves to Native American religious practices is destructive enough to be called genocide by the Lakotas. Other people's cultures are not a shopping mall from which the privileged get to pick and choose.

White people are living on stolen land, which belongs to people who are not relics of some far distant, mythic natural state before history. They live here, and they are very much under assault. It doesn't matter how much people feel drawn to their own version of Native American spirituality. No perceived need outweighs the wishes of the culture's owners.

Many people have longings for a spiritual practice and a spiritual community. There aren't any obvious, honorable answers for Euro-Americans. The majority of radicals are repulsed by the authoritarian, militaristic misogyny of the Abrahmic religions.

The pagans often offer a vision of the cosmos that's a better fit for radicals, although the practice is where these religions often fall apart. The spiritual practices of paganism are new, so don't have the depth of tradition or the functioning communities that develop over time.

Three elements that seem central to a spiritual tradition are a connection to the divine, communal bonding, and reinforcement of the culture's ethic. With paganism, the spiritual impulse has been rerouted to the realm of the psychological—the exact opposite of a religious experience. Spiritual enlargement, union, and emancipation

do not emerge from a focus on our psychology. We experience them when we leave the prisons of our personal pains and joys by connecting to that mystery that animates everything. But like everything else that might lend our lives strength and meaning, spiritual life—and the communities it both needs and creates—has been destroyed by the dictates of capitalism. The single-pointed focus on ourselves as some kind of project is not just predictably narcissistic, but at odds with every religion worth the name.

Some white people say they want to "re-indigenize," that they want a spiritual connection to the land where they live. That requires building a relationship to that place. That place is actually millions of creatures, the vast majority too small for us to see, all working together to create more life. To indigenize means offering friendship to all of them. That means getting to know them, respecting their boundaries and committing to their care. Maybe then they will speak to you or even offer you help. It's a thirty-year mystery to me how the neo-pagans can claim to worship the earth and, with few exceptions, be indifferent to fighting for it. If the sacred doesn't deserve defense, then what ever will?

We once again have choices to make, as individuals and as a movement. If our task is to create a culture of resistance, then every element of it must support our political resistance and continually reinscribe our values into both our personal and communal behavior. A spirituality of resistance could be an important element. Practical techniques to connect people to the other beings with whom we share this land, to build back those relationships, could lend both strength and commitment to the fight. That spirituality could also, hopefully, guide

us as we construct a way of life based on the values we hold dear, values like justice, compassion, and equity. It could reassert our place as humble participants in our human communities, our living communities, and in the cosmos. It could direct us in everything from socializing the young to our daily interactions to our material culture.

We need that new religion to help set the world right, and to nestle each human life in an unbroken circle of individual conscience and longing, communal bonding, connection to the multitude of members of this tribe called carbon, and finally our safe place in the mystery.

Resistance is a simple concept: power, unjust and immoral, is confronted and dismantled. Most of the population is never going to join an actual resistance. We're social creatures; by definition, it's hard to stand against the herd. Add to that how successful systems of oppression are at disabling the human capacity for resistance. The pool of potential resisters is going to be small. Conformity brings rewards and privileges; fighting back brings punishment and alienation. Most people are not psychologically suited to the requirements of resistance. The sooner we accept that, the better.

Resistance movements require two things: loyalty and material support. Acquiring them are the two main tasks of the culture of resistance, although there may be others depending on the scope of the resistance at hand. Those others would include building alternative institutions for egalitarian, participatory governance; installing systems of justice for settling disputes; creating economic networks that can provide for basic survival

needs apart from the injurious system; and socialization processes for both children and adults to reclaim and defend an indigenous culture under assault or create a new culture for those escaping the dominant culture. In real life, all these projects may not always be distinct, but instead form a reinforcing series of activities.

For those of us who can't be active on the frontlines—and this will be most of us—our job is to create a culture that will encourage and promote political resistance. The main tasks will be loyalty and material support.

Loyalty is sorely lacking across the left. First, and worst, is the out and out betrayal. In any serious movement, snitches would be treated seriously. This is because snitching means that your people—your comrades, your friends—will be arrested, tortured, and killed. Our best hope is to instill the value of loyalty in our culture resistance now, to stop snitching before it begins.

We tend to destroy our leaders with criticism, often personal and vicious. The anti-hierarchical stance of radicals leads to an adolescent reaction against anyone who rises to a public position. The charge of "selling out" is also leveled at anyone with the temerity to actually get something done. We must call it what it is when we see it happening. Attacking our leaders is painful and destructive to both individuals and movements. The younger members can't be expected to be able to identify and take a stand against this behavior. It is up to the middle-aged and older members to set the tone and behavioral expectations, to guide the community norms.

Real movements require leaders. A collection of individuals, no matter how angry or inspired, will remain inchoate without language and ineffective without direction. Movements are easily destroyed by imprisoning or killing the leaders; that's why governments do it. Successful movements are always training new leaders because they recognize their critical functions. We can reject the concept of leadership all we want, but that will not eradicate its necessity.

Of course, small scale and aboveground groups should be democratic whenever possible, but that does not change the fact that leaders must emerge nor does it change the fact that underground groups engaged in coordinated or paramilitary activities require hierarchy. Combatants, especially, need leadership.

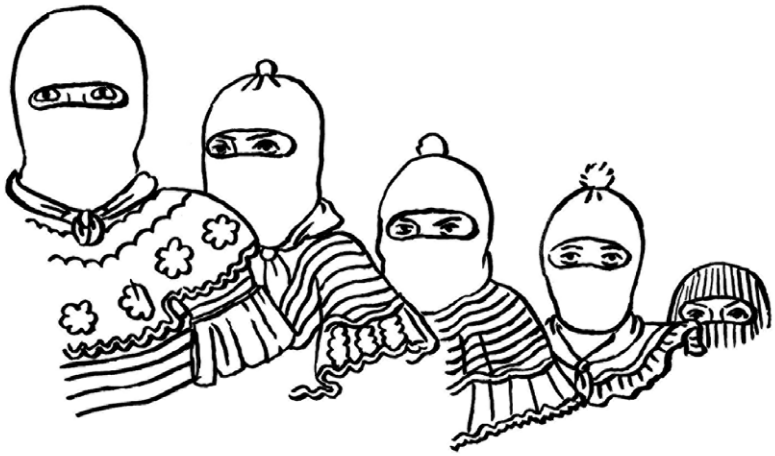
If we accept the reality of leadership, we can trade protection for expectation. Loyalty works both ways. Clarity of ideas, explication of goals, and personal courage can elevate an organizer, a teacher, a writer, or a minister to a leadership position. In exchange, those agreeing to be led have a right to expect sterling personal ethics, self-sacrifice, and the leaders' prioritizing of the movement. Charisma and status can be used in very ugly ways, and individuals who use power for personal gain or sexual exploits should, of course, be rejected from a leadership position. But a wholesale rejection of leadership means a movement will be stuck at a level of ineffective small groups. It may feel radical but it will change nothing.

Loyalty to each other, especially to frontline actionists who are taking serious risks, is just as important. That loyalty requires those of us who work aboveground to

declare our support for direct action at every opportunity. We need to use words like "resistance" and phrases like "culture of resistance"; we need to reject personal consumer choices as a solution and explain why to anyone who listens; and we need to defend whatever degree of militance we're comfortable with plus one.

Loyalty also implies material support. Time, money, and other resources are always needed by actionists.

Communities that are used to taking care of each other have a much easier time mobilizing those existing networks into a culture of resistance. Such established networks could be called a culture of survival.



The radical environmental movement is largely white and well-assimilated into the non-community of the corporate-controlled, mass-media dominated, industrially-produced culture of the contemporary United States and its colonies. Community has been destroyed to the point where we don't know the names of the people living twenty feet from us and communication has been reduced to keystrokes of consonants. Those of us from that world are not even starting from scratch; we're starting from negative. Hopefully, we can learn by

example from comrades who come from more intact communities, from elders who remember a way of life organized around human needs instead of corporate profits, and from history. Necessity will have to reinvent us.

People need a mythic matrix that includes a narrative of courage in the face of power, loyalty to comrades and cause, and the eventual triumph of good over evil. They need the emotional support of a functioning community that believes in resistance. And they need an intellectual atmosphere that encourages analysis, discussion, and the development of political consciousness.

The environmental movement has made a choice, a choice we're asking each reader to reevaluate against industrial culture's relentless assault on our planet. The collective decision to date has been to reject the possibility of a serious resistance movement. That conclusion has been fostered by many cultural forces, some of which go back centuries.

This is the moment when we have to decide: does a world exist outside ourselves and is that world worth fighting for? Another 200 species went extinct today. They were my kin. They were yours, too. If we know them as such, why aren't we fighting to save them with everything we've got?

To make a successful cultural transition from survival to resistance requires two related processes. One is an active, collective, and political embrace of direct confrontations with power. The other is a psychological break with an identification with the oppressor.

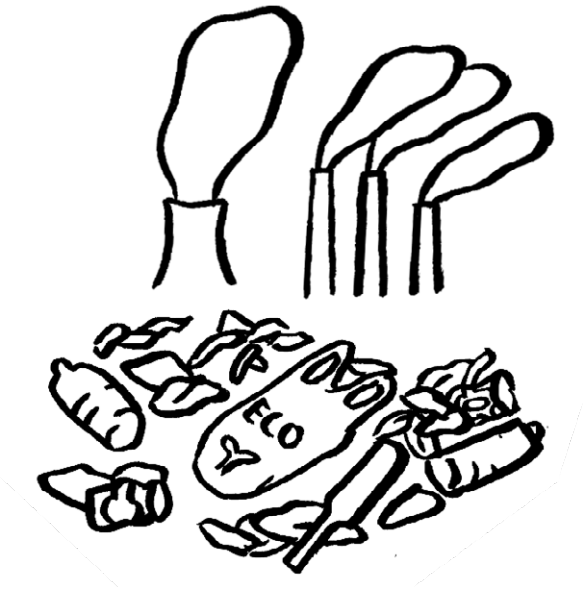
A culture of resistance must provide a range of emotional and material supports or people will give up and retreat to whatever personal solace they can find. Central to that support is a framework that provides meaning. People need stories; people who resist need stories of resistance.

The tasks of a culture of resistance include holding and enforcing community norms of justice, equity, commitment, and solidarity; encouraging vibrant political discussion and debate; producing cultural products—poems, songs, art—that create a mythic matrix organized around the theme of resistance; and building individual character based on courage, resilience, and loyalty.

Specific material projects encompass everything from prisoner support to alternative schools to the creation of institutions capable of running civic society as the old system collapses. Along the way, from personal relationships to small groups to our larger institutions, a culture of resistance has got to embody justice and firmly reject domination. This means that white people have to own up to white privilege, ally with people of color, and commit to dismantling racism. It means that people from settler cultures have to acknowledge that the Americas are stolen land in an ongoing genocide, a genocide we must stop. It means men have got to cease in their sexual atrocities against women and girls, atrocities as quotidian on the left as on the right, and it means women have to stand in solidarity with each other. It means that men must ally themselves with women and against those who would abuse them.

The odds are longer now than they've ever been. But there are warriors who might yet throw their bodies between the last of our future and its destroyers, if only they have a viable strategy and visible support. So the question is: will the rest of us help them? Will we cast our lot with them, speak in their defense, shelter them in danger, sing songs of their stories, raise our children to take their place, prepare the way for their victory, claim them as our bravest and brightest?

Another 200 species went extinct today. Make your choice.



Chapter 5

Other Plans

A viable plan for social transformation requires stopping the destruction that is civilization, actively repairing the damage done to biotic communities across the globe, and renewing and repairing human cultures that are truly sustainable—all within a framework of human rights.

Burning fossil fuels has to stop. Its extraction creates a permanent swath of destruction, and the easy energy makes the rest of industrial civilization's horrors possible.

All activities that destroy living communities must cease, forever. This includes clear-cutting forests, overgrazing grasslands, damming rivers, draining wetlands, agriculture, mining, and life in cities. Instead, humans need to get sustenance as participants inside intact biotic communities.

Human consumption has got to be scaled back. Since it's the rich countries doing most of the consuming, the rich's ability to steal from the poor must be confronted and stopped.

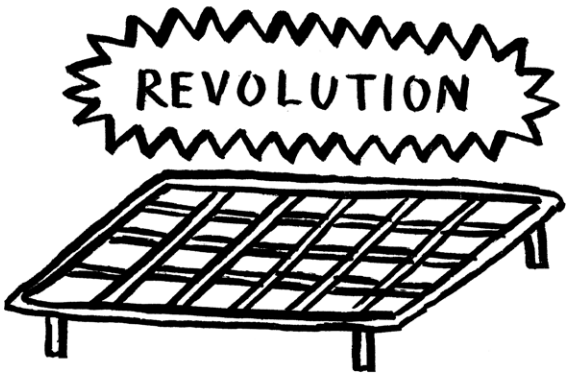
Human population must be reduced. If we don't do it voluntarily, the world will reduce it for us.

Without real engagement with the depth and scale of the problem, we're left with proposed solutions that will not save our planet, which break down into three basic categories:

1. *Tilters,* so named because they're tilting at windmills. These technofixers would leave industrialization and corporate capitalism in place, replacing fossil fuels with so-called renewables. Lester Brown and Al Gore are prime examples.

2. *Descenders,* who argue that the oil economy will slow to a halt over a few generations, and there is nothing to be done beyond personal and local community preparation for energy descent.

3. *Lifers.* They acknowledge resource depletion, energy descent, the destructive nature of industrial civilization, and the looming catastrophe of global warming, yet urge personal lifestyle change and the concept of 'lifeboats' as the only possible solution.



Tilters

The problem with the Tilters is that they leave industrialization, capitalism, and civilization in place. All of these are disasters for the planet and for human rights.

Capitalism refers to specific economies that are organized for the accumulation of private wealth, not for the provision of human needs. This idea is quite new in the history of human affairs. In almost all previous societies, economic activity was determined by social rules, traditions, and moral considerations, not by the market. The motive of individual gain was generally absent.

The main problems with capitalism are:

Capitalism is based on endless growth. But our planet is finite. We cannot consume more of everything—trees, fish, soil—each year and have anything left.

Capitalist investment does not provide for human needs like food, housing and health care; it goes where investors might make a profit.

Capitalism destroys democracy and human rights. Any arrangement where a tiny fraction of the population consumes most of the resources will require violence. The power of wealth will destroy democratic processes, in that wealth can buy the laws, the courts, the government that it wants: the rest of us have essentially no access.

Leaving capitalism in place will never produce a just and sustainable world. A growth-based economic system will continue to turn living beings into consumer goods, and democracies into commodities. Yet the Tilters want to keep this system.

Their solution involves substituting renewables for fossil fuels, by using incentives and penalties to try to make the market shift towards renewables. A carbon tax and cap and trade proposals are the favorites. In cap and trade, a regulatory body sets a limit on the allowable amount of a specific activity and then permits are auctioned off to the highest bidder. The problem is the usual capitalist pyramid: the people with the most money will get to buy the permits.

In Europe, fraudulent underreporting has helped render the Kyoto treaty ineffective. The European carbon market has only "enriched polluting industries and their consultants, while producing minimal decreases in their emissions."

The issue of renewables is worth a critical look. There are serious problems with wind energy. Even in good wind areas, wind will not be able to provide more than a small fraction of electricity demand. The first problem

is variability. Wind is an intermittent force, and electricity is essentially impossible to store. Without fossil fuel plants as backup, the number of windmills needed would be impossibly large. Most damning, one researcher believes that wind power would result in more fossil fuel usage than if windmills hadn't been built. Gas plants are most efficient when run at constant output; plants that vary their output to follow wind changes are much less efficient, and the frequent variation reduces the life of gas turbines.

Solar energy fares little better. Solar thermal energy costs more than 7.5 times as much as a coal-fired plant. Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels could cost thirteen times as much. Winter presents an insurmountable problem. Solar thermal has the advantage of energy storage, but still requires backup capacity, and to get that power to population centers requires long lines with transmission losses. PV systems have the same variability and storage problems as wind, and are also costly. PV systems can take anywhere from 150 to 294 years to pay back costs. At a certain point, the cost of energy would lead to the collapse of the industrial economy, a possibility the Tilters are trying their hardest to hold off.

Windmills, PV panels, and the grid itself are all manufactured using the cheap energy provided by fossil fuel. Such items will cease to be feasible when fossil fuel costs begin to rise. The elements used in some key technologies—gallium, indium, tellurium—simply don't exist in the quantities necessary for PVs to supply any meaningful amount of world electricity consumption. Renewables require cement, aluminum, and steel, which

are mined and manufactured using fossil fuels. These are not ingredients with which we can build a sustainable way of life. Their extraction leaves broken rivers behind them; their refining demands the heat of hell; and their intended usage is for the continued consumption of the planet.

That I have to address biofuels at all tells me that mainstream environmentalists are dwellers in the land of fantasy. Corn ethanol may not provide any net energy. Every acre of corn used for ethanol requires a corresponding acre somewhere else to be cleared to make up for food lost. This land clearing dramatically increases greenhouse gas emissions. Converting grassland and rainforest to corn, soy, and palm oil for biofuels results in carbon emissions thirty-seven times greater than the reduction in greenhouse gases afforded by switching from fossil fuels to biofuels. The nitrous oxide emissions from the petrochemical fertilizers used on corn and rapeseed nixes any carbon savings.

And electric cars? They take up to five times as much energy to produce as a regular car. Over the life of the car, hybrids consume more energy than an SUV.

There is no energy source that can provide for the continuation of industrial culture. Sun, rivers, wind and trees can provide us with a home. They cannot provide for a personal empire of energy.

The other major failure of the Tilters is their assessment of overpopulation. Population is not an easy topic for people who care about human rights. Historically, some very nasty elements have used population as an excuse

for "population control" policies constructed around a simmering racist meta-narrative: the problem is really that brown people are too stupid and/or too sexual to control themselves. Those of us who come to the population discussion from the perspective of resource depletion, human rights, or feminism have to distinguish ourselves from the racist history entwined in the issue. When we say "overpopulation" we need to define what we mean and why it matters.

What I personally mean is that the Earth is a bound sphere. The planet is finite. There are absolute limits to the numbers of individuals that any species can attain. That is what carrying capacity means: how many members of a species can the environment support indefinitely. Too many members and that species is drawing down resources, degrading the landbase for itself and for other species, and will most likely end in extinction. That is physical reality. For most of human history, we were very aware of the limits of our surrounding community.

What broke the cultural knowledge of those correspondences was agriculture. By drawing down entire ecosystems, humans were able to dramatically increase their numbers. Remember that agriculture is the replacement of biotic communities with monocrops for humans. Agriculture has let vast amounts of resources accumulate into more and more humans—sunlight, rain, rivers, soil.

And here's a problem in the discourse about the dilemma. Many sustainability writers take the current level of resource extraction as an unquestioned baseline.

They assume the amount of grain now being produced can simply go on indefinitely. It can't. It's based on drawdown and long term destruction of entire continents, a destruction that is about to hit bottom.

Tilters identify poverty as a factor in population overshoot, but they don't identify capitalism or civilization as the leading cause of poverty.

What the planet needs most is relief from the relentless assault of agriculture. Like almost everyone alive today, the Tilters don't realize that agriculture is biotic cleansing, drawing down species, ecosystems, and soil to temporarily increase the planet's carrying-capacity for humans. This is also the blind spot endemic to claims that shifting grain from animals to humans would solve world hunger: that grain is only temporary.

Tilters propose increasing food supplies by raising land productivity through fertilizers, irrigation, and higher-yield varieties. The fertilizers are all derived from gas and oil: their day is done. Irrigation results in soil death by salinization and has brought down a great number of pre-industrial civilizations. It also results in river death by dewatering: a fish out of water is a dead fish. Eighty percent of China's rivers, for instance, now support no life. Irrigation also brings devastation to the surrounding wetlands, which should be the most species-dense habitat on the planet and are now historic oddities. Water tables have dropped so far that half of India's hand wells are dry, forcing people into desperate urban slums. Agriculture provides its final insult to the land when water tables drop below the reach of tree roots. Trees are the backbone of their biotic communi-

ties: without them, the world is emptied to a monoculture of dust. Oil drilling equipment, which requires the cheap power provided by fossil fuel, is then necessary to get the water. There is no future for humans, for soil, for the winged and gilled in these proposals. No solutions that rely on agriculture will be real solutions.

Despite the declarations of an inexplicably popular book, the world was not created for us. As apex predators, we are utterly dependent on the work of millions of other creatures who took a cold rock and turned it into a home. We don't have a right to more than our share. We will not save this planet as long as agriculture—its religion, its psychology, its entitlement—continues.

So how many people could this planet support sustainably? A truly sustainable number would be somewhere between 300 and 600 million. It may sound impossible: it may be impossible, given the time we have left. On the positive side, the same social and political processes need to be set in motion whether the goal is 8 billion, one billion, or 300 million. If we can do it at all, we might as well do it right.

One positive fact about being alive is that we're all going to die. If we can start reproducing at below replacement numbers, the problem would take care of itself. And it won't even take that long.

Descenders

The Descenders are another group often found in permaculture and peak oil groups. John Michael Greer's book The Long Descent cites examples of past civilizations that collapsed due to resource depletion, and he predicts that the end of industrial society will be a series of mini-crises and respites as energy decline proceeds in a downward stairstep.

The problem with this basic thesis is twofold. Industrial society does not match anything that has come before. Entire continents, and indeed six billion people, are dependent on fossil fuel for basic foodstuffs. When oil production starts its inevitable slide down the dark side of Hubbert's curve, six billion people will have nothing to eat.

In previous collapses, there were living forests, grasslands, rivers, and coastal areas inside of which people were able to subsist as they always had. That is over, over on a scale that no one seems willing to acknowledge: fish, 90 percent gone; forests, 98 percent gone; prairies,

99 percent gone. No past civilization could even dream of this level of conquest. We are living on oil which at a point not too distant will take more energy to extract than the energy it contains. This is a cliff, not a soft stair of descent.

The other chasm between the Descenders and reality is the collapse of ecosystems and basic life-support functions across the planet. Greer's book talks about "collapse," but his collapse only refers to human societies. Meanwhile, life is fraying at the seams from the surge of carbon, the clearcut of species.

The Descenders, like the Tilters, are attempting to create a way out of the horrible facts before us, but their way out is not to face and then attempt to alter those facts. The Descender's way out is essentially emotional, a lulling story that it will all be okay: it's happened before, and the world didn't come to an end.

Except this time, the world is coming to an end. This is the reality of mass extinction. Reducing physical reality to a narrative is, of course, one of the core components of liberalism. To suggest switching narratives as a political plan is a dead end of insane proportions. The murder of my planet is not a bad movie I can turn off.

If we need a narrative, it's a simple one: resistance is possible. If you want to add some suspense, try: and we're out of time. Beyond that, can we stop telling stories and get to work?

The Tilters usually believe in political engagement. From Al Gore to Lester Brown to Bill McKibben, they encourage civic participation to force institutional

change. There is often a fierceness to their urging that matches the seriousness of the situation. Even better is the underlying recognition that institutional change is primary, that personal change will never begin to address the situation. The problem with the Tilters is that they're attempting to save industrial civilization.

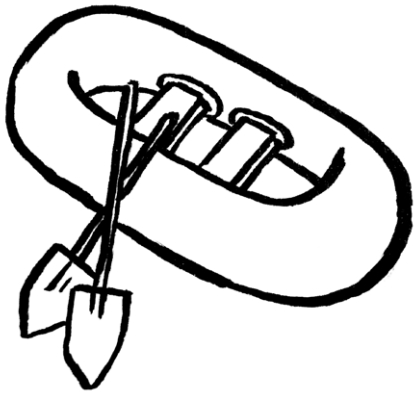
The Descenders, on the other hand, have an assessment of energy—and the low-energy society of the future—that is reality-based. Writes Greer, "As fossil fuel stops being cheap and abundant, standards of living throughout the industrial world will shrink toward the level of the nonindustrial world." Absent from most of the Descenders is any awareness of the biotic emergencies the planet is facing or any clarion call to action. The claim is that our political institutions will never respond, and all we can do is prepare ourselves as individuals and maybe as local communities as the system collapses.

If our political institutions aren't working, then we need new ones. But the actions the Descenders suggest are the usual personal scale adjustments: get used to less energy, plant a garden, learn a nonindustrial trade. The only larger scale Greer encourages is the community level: "Since governments have by and large dropped the ball completely, it's up to individuals, families, groups, and local communities to get ready for the future ahead of us."

This is the other main drawback of the Descenders. As critical as they are of survivalism—the ultimate individualism—they are equally as dismissive of political activism. On the occasions that political resistance co-

mes up, it is firmly erased as an option. I don't know if there has ever before been a movement that understands the problem is political yet unilaterally rejects political solutions, and I don't understand why this rejection has taken hold of so many smart, engaged minds.

The Tilters and the Descenders are both offering liberal solutions. Liberalism will always fail to produce radical change, and if there was ever a moment when that change was needed, it is now.



Lifers

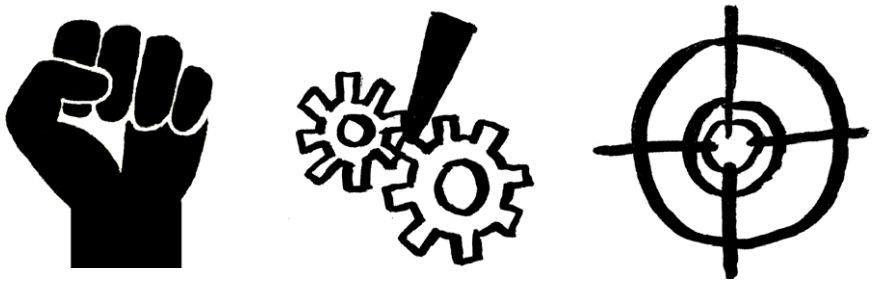
The Transition Town model comes closest to the culture of resistance component of a Deep Green Resistance movement. But there is a deep contradiction in the Transition Town movement: the program implicitly calls for institutional change, yet many of its writers insist on a personal "Lifeboat" concept. The Lifeboat model was originally proposed by Richard Heinberg in his book Powerdown: Options and Actions for a Post-Carbon World. The idea is to accumulate skills and knowledge for small-scale community survival as well as "preserving the cultural achievements of the past few centuries."

The Transition Town concept was created by Robert Hopkins as a framework for organizing a community response to peak oil and global warming. It was one way to answer the question "What can I do?" with a concrete plan. The plan is an Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP). There's much to be said for the twelve steps that The Transition Town Handbook lays out as a process to create the EDAP. Local groups are directed to break down into working groups to address whatever they feel is relevant to the process of "building community resilience and reducing their carbon footprints." Along the way they're encouraged to network with other related groups in their area, work on projects that are visible and practical for the public (e.g., planting nut trees in the town center), offer "reskilling" of lost and soon-to-be-needed traditional subsistence skills, and build bridges to local governments. They also recommend that transition town groups include the UN Declaration of Human Rights in their statement of purpose.

Unfortunately, far too many of the Transitioners perseverate with the usual liberalisms: personal change is political change or personal change is the only change. The Transition Town movement is a decentralized, loosely organized network and the people involved hold a wide range of opinions. Right now, the numbers are on the side of the anti-political OIMBYs (Only In My Backyard) despite the fact that some of the foundational writings are clear about the necessity of institutional change. This is the deep contradiction in the Transition movement.

I would like this to read as more of an observation than a criticism, and, ultimately, an invitation. The Transitioners are trying to create at least some of the local infrastructure with which cultures of resistance are tasked: food, education, methods of economic exchange. What's missing is the recognition that political resistance is necessary. We need the aboveground group that will vociferously defend direct action and militance, plan for it, support it, work beside it. We need massive pressure aboveground to dismantle corporate personhood, capitalism, civilization, and patriarchy. This includes building alternative institutions to take their place and to structure our cultures on justice and sustainability.

We also need to recognize that aboveground efforts may not be enough. This means accepting that as of now we don't have the numbers for a peaceful regime change. It means a stalwart solidarity with the few cadres and combatants who are willing to attempt direct attacks on the infrastructure that is killing our planet. The choice is to fight or to stand with those who fight. Anything else means the world will be left to die.



Chapter 6

A Taxonomy of Action

If you love this planet, it's time to put away the distractions that have no potential to stop destruction: lifestyle adjustments, consumer choices, moral purity. And it's time to put away the diversion of hope, the last, useless weapon of the desperate. We have better weapons. It's time to put them all on the table and make some decisions.

What do we want? We want to end global warming and the globalized exploitation of the poor. We want the planet to recover and rejuvenate. We want, in no uncertain terms, to bring down civilization.

As Derrick wrote in Endgame, "Bringing down civilization means depriving the rich of their ability to steal from the poor, and it means depriving the powerful of their ability to destroy the planet." It means thoroughly

destroying the political, social, physical, and technological infrastructure that not only permits the rich to steal and the powerful to destroy, but rewards them for doing so.

The strategies and tactics we choose must be part of a grander strategy. This is not the same as movement-building; taking down civilization does not require a majority or a single coherent movement. A grand strategy is necessarily diverse and decentralized, and will include many kinds of actionists. If those in power seek Full-Spectrum Dominance, we need Full-Spectrum Resistance.

When we seek effective strategies and tactics, we have to sort through millions of past and potential actions, most of which are either historical failures or dead ends. We can save ourselves a lot of time and anguish with a quick and dirty resistance taxonomy. By looking over whole branches of action at once we can quickly judge which tactics are actually appropriate and effective for saving the planet. A taxonomy of action can also suggest tactics we might otherwise overlook.

We can divide all of our tactics and projects into either acts of omission or acts of commission. Sometimes these categories overlap, and sometimes one tactic can support another.

But first, a warning. There is no easy way out. Every resistance victory has been won by blood and tears, with anguish and sacrifice. There are only so many ways to resist, and they all involve profound and dangerous struggle. Once we learn the stories of those who fight

TAXONOMY OF ACTION

ACTS OF OMISSION

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION

- **Strikes and walk-outs** (workers)
- **Boycotts and embargoes** (consumers and buyers)
- **Tax refusal** (taxpayers and debtors)
- **Conscientious Objection** (military and draftees)
- **Shunning and Excommunication** (community and society)
- **Civil Disobedience** (citizens)
- **Mutiny and Insubordination** (government and military)
- **Withdrawal and emigration** (various)
- **Other Noncooperation** (economic and social)

ACTS OF COMISSION

CONFRONTING POWER AND BUILDING RESISTANCE

INDIRECT ACTION

Education, symbolic protest and lobbying

- **Lobbying** (to power)
  - Petitions
  - Declarations
  - Pressuring Individuals or Groups
- **Protests and symbolic acts** (to public)
  - Fasts
  - Bearing Witness
  - Lock-downs
- **Education and Awareness Raising** (to public)
  - Propaganda
  - Agitations
  - Organizing Rallies
  - Theatre
  - Art and Spectacles
- **Support Work and Building Alternatives**
  - Social Welfare
  - Mutual Aid and Support Systems
  - Permaculture
  - Food Systems
  - Alternative Building
  - Alternative Healing
  - Off-the-grid Work
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Alternative Economics
- **Capacity Building and operations**
  - Logistics and Communication
  - Transportation (including escape, evasion, and safehouses)
  - Fundraising & Tithing
  - Security Culture
  - Research and Reconnaisance
  - Coordination with Allies and Sponsors

DIRECT ACTION

Actively confronting and dismantling power

- **Direct Confrontation and Conflict**
  - **Obstruction and Occupation** (nondestructive)
  - **Reclamation and Expropriation**
    - Land Seizure
    - "Liberation" of Supplies and Equipment
  - **Property and Material Destruction** (threats or acts)
  - **Violence Against Humans** (threats or acts)
    - Self-Defence
    - Offensive

Increasing numbers of people requiered

Increasing risk

back, we have no choice but to fight back ourselves. Only by doing that can we hope to live up to their example. We must fight back because if we don't we will die. We must fight back not only to win, but to show that we are both alive and worthy of that life.

Acts of omission include strikes, boycotts and embargoes, tax refusal, conscientious objection to military service, mutiny and insubordination within military service, shunning and shaming (for severe social transgressions and wrongdoing, such as abuse or rape), civil disobedience (the refusal to follow unjust laws and customs), withdrawal or emigration from society, and other acts of noncooperation.

All acts of omission require very large numbers of people to be permanently effective on a large scale. An effective resistance movement based on acts of omission might need 10 percent, or 50 percent, or 90 percent of the population to win. One in a thousand people withdrawing from the global economy would have a negligible impact. Acts of commission are a different story. What if one out of a thousand people joined a campaign of direct action to bring down civilization? Seven million brave and smart people could ensure the survival of our planet.

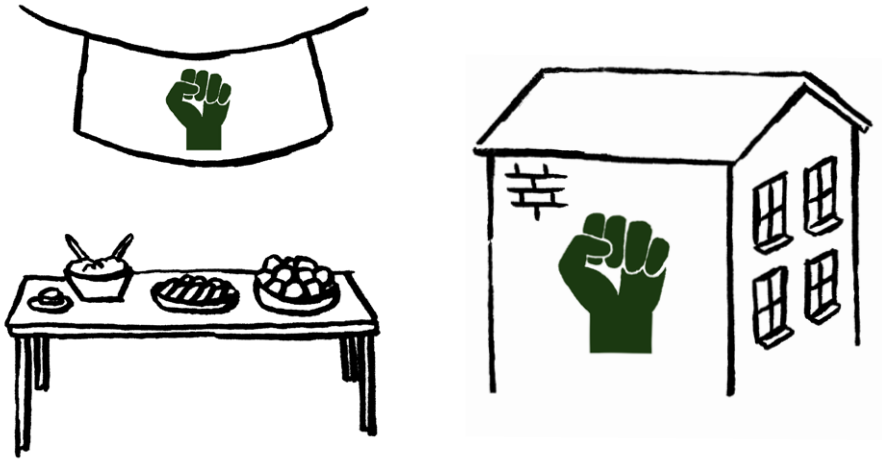
Acts of omission are not going to bring down civilization. Let's talk about action with more potential. We can split acts of commission into six branches:

Lobbying is attempting to influence or persuade those in power through letter writing, petitions, declarations, protests, and so on. Lobbying via persuasion is a dead

end in virtually every radical endeavor. If those in power were essentially moral and could be convinced to change their behavior, we wouldn't be where we are now. Our ability to lobby those in power is vastly outmatched by their ability to lobby each other. Lobbying is simply not a priority in taking down civilization.

Protests and symbolic acts are tactics used mostly to gain attention. When used effectively, protests are part of a broader movement, and can show strength and attract recruits.

Education and awareness raising includes propaganda, agitation, rallies, theater, art and spectacle. Education won't directly take down civilization, but it may help to radicalize and recruit people.



Support work and building alternatives may take the physical form of sustainable local food systems, alternative construction, alternative health care, and off-the-grid energy, transport, and communications. It may also include socially focused endeavors such as mutual

aid, prisoner support, conflict resolution work, alternative economics, and intentional communities. These support structures directly enable resistance.

Building alternatives won't directly bring down civilization, but as industrial civilization unravels, alternatives can bolster resistance in times of crisis; resisters are more able to fight if they aren't preoccupied with getting food, water, and shelter. And alternative communities can act as an escape hatch for regular people, so that their day-to-day work and efforts go to autonomous societies rather than authoritarian ones. To serve either role, alternatives must be part of a culture of resistance.

Capacity building and logistics are the backbone of any successful resistance movement. No sustained campaign of direct action is possible without a healthy logistical and operational core which includes:

Recruiting new members, training recruits in tactics, strategy, and logistics, and screening recruits to assess their suitability and to exclude infiltrators.

Secure and rapid communication, to share information and coordinate plans. Many resistance groups have failed because of inadequate or insecure communications.

Funding, whether for offices and equipment, legal costs and bail, or underground activities.

Transportation, and distribution of materials.

Security, a necessity for any group big enough to make a splash and become a target for state repression and intelligence gathering. Infiltration is a serious concern, as is surveillance. This does not apply solely to groups or individuals considering illegal actions. Many times it is the aboveground resisters who are more at risk as working aboveground means being identifiable.

Research and reconnaissance, to gather information about potential targets, and develop strategy.

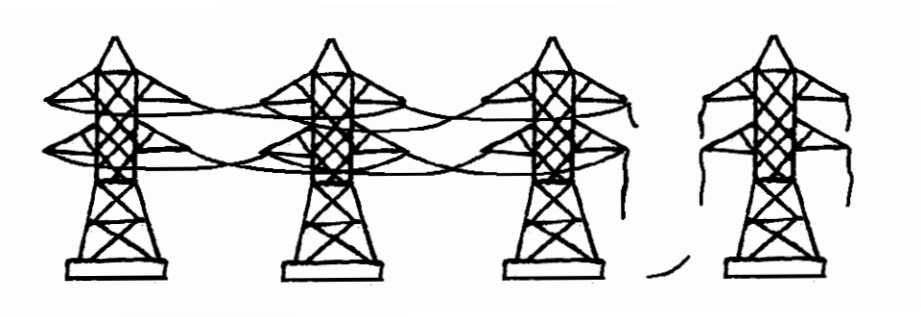
Essential services and care, including repair of equipment and clothing. Health care skills and equipment can be extremely valuable, and resistance groups should have at least basic first aid capabilities.

Coordination with allies and sponsors.

Direct conflict and confrontation with power is required for success; you can't win on the defensive. There are four basic ways to directly confront those in power:

Nondestructive obstruction and occupation—block it. This includes the blockade of a highway, a tree sit, a lockdown, or the occupation of a building. These acts prevent those in power from using or destroying the places in question. With enough dedicated people, these actions can be very effective.

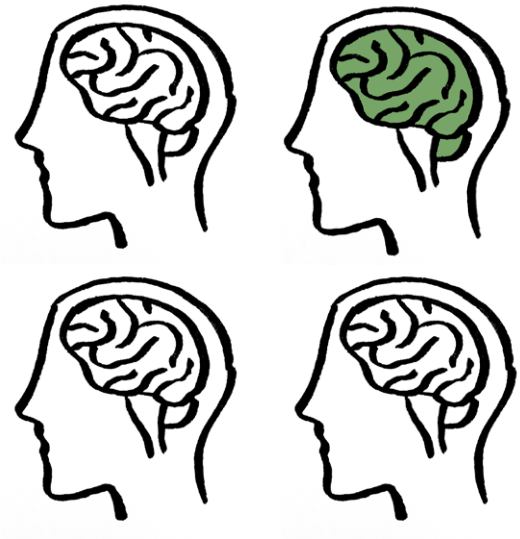
Reclamation and expropriation—take it. Instead of blocking the use of land or property, the resistance takes it for their own use. For example, the Landless Workers Movement in Brazil occupies underused farmland and sets up farming villages for landless or displaced people.



Property and material destruction (threats or acts)—break it. This category includes sabotage, which can be more than just physical damage to machines; labor activism has long included work slowdowns and deliberate bungling. The US military has published a number of manuals and pamphlets on sabotage for use by occupied people.

Violence against humans (threats or acts). The purpose of violent resistance isn't simply to do violence or exact revenge; the purpose is to reduce the capacity of those in power to do further violence.

The incredible level of day-to-day violence inflicted by this culture on human beings and on the natural world means that to refrain from fighting back will not prevent violence. The question, as ever, is which particular strategy—violent or not—will work.



Chapter 7

The Psychology of Resistance

Our premise is that the majority of people will not engage in resistance. Some reasons are obvious: ingrained obedience, ignorance, and the benefits of participation in the dominant culture. But there are also specific psychological barriers to resistance, at least four of which have been explored in psychological research.

Conformity: Research has found that those most likely to conform tend to have high levels of anxiety, low status, a high need for approval, and authoritarian personalities. That last part is particularly interesting—the people who are likely to boss others around are themselves psychologically pliable.

Authority: People who stand up to authority risk censure from their family or social group, losing their jobs, or public ridicule. The legal system, threats, and physical violence are used against people who contemplate resistance.

Learned helplessness offers another insight. In psychological research, people who believed their problems were pervasive, permanent ("things have always been this way, and they always will be"), and personal ("it's all my fault") were much more likely to suffer from learned helplessness and depression.

This can be extrapolated to our own situation. Those in power encourage us to believe that the status quo is natural, inevitable, even the best possible society. If someone is dissatisfied with the way society works, they say, then it is that individual's personal emotional problem. But if we can trace these problems back to their common roots—in capitalism, in patriarchy, in civilization at large—then we can overcome the learned helplessness such horrors would otherwise create.

The bystander effect, and the related diffusion of responsibility, is a final psychological effect at play in determining resistance or non-resistance. In the 1960s, psychologists John Darley and Bibb Latané studied this effect, and showed that in an emergency situation where a bystander needs to intervene or assist, the likelihood that someone will act decreased with the number of bystanders present. The response time of the participants also increased significantly as the number of participants grew. In other words, the more people present, the more their sense of responsibility became diffused.

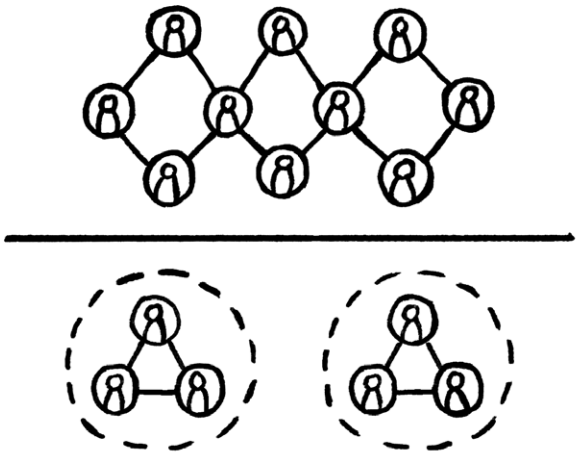
We can again see the parallels for our situation. Those in power constantly promise—or more subtly, imply by their inaction—that everything is fine. That mass poverty is not a problem. That global warming is not an emergency. They claim that people who do warn about

such problems are "fearmongers," and act as though acknowledging the serious global problems they cause would cause chaos and mass panic.

Of course, not everyone falls for such cognitive falsehoods. Furthermore, some people are not so prone to blindly follow authority, are not so vulnerable to the pressures of conformity. Instead, some people seem psychologically predisposed to resistance. The effective resister has some important personality characteristics, with bravery, intelligence, and persistence among the most important.

Those who are willing to undertake serious resistance are always a small minority regardless of circumstances, largely for the psychological and social reasons discussed above. To put it bluntly: we have to get over the hope that resistance will ever be adopted by the majority and focus on doing what we can with who we have. Given all that, the purpose of a resistance organization is to enable as many of those people as possible to resist, and to organize those people in ways that makes maximum use of their limited numbers.

We too often base our activism on the idea that we need to have a mass movement to overturn this wretched system. I can only believe that if there is ever a mass movement against those in power, it will happen after civilization collapses, and not before.



Chapter 8

Organizational Structure

Resistance organizations can be divided into aboveground (AG) and underground (UG) groups. These groups have strongly divergent organizational and operational needs, even when they have the same goals. Broadly speaking, aboveground groups do not carry out risky illegal actions, and are organized in ways that maximize their ability to use public institutions and communications. Underground groups exist primarily to carry out illegal or repressed activities and are organized in ways that maximize their own security and effectiveness.

There has to be a partition, a firewall, between aboveground and belowground activities. In order to be as safe and effective as possible, every person in a resistance movement must decide for her or himself whether to be aboveground or underground. It is essential that this decision be made; to attempt to straddle the line is unsafe for everyone.

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AG AND UG ORGANIZATIONS

	ABOVEGROUND	UNDERGROUND
Membership	Membership is likely open, membership of any given member known by others in the organization.	Membership is closed or closely guarded. Members are not aware of the identity of members outside of their immediate area of organization.
Public face and outward behavior	The group aims to attract attention and conducts public relation using "its own face." Members may strongly voice support for change and resistance.	The group aims to appear unremarkable or to deflect attention from itself (though probably not its action). Communication with the public happens through anonymous communiques or press offices.
Decision making	May emphasize democratic, transparent, and participatory decision making. They tend to be more broadly participatory in nature.	Members are likely to appear outwardly apolitical or conservative. Decision making process is internally known but but outwardly covert, many decisions based on internal rank and structure.

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AG AND UG ORGANIZATIONS

	ABOVEGROUND	UNDERGROUND
Internal communication and movement	Internal communication (with and between groups) may be open, frequent and in the clear.	Communication between groups is likely to be limited, guarded, terse, and encoded.
Actions	Members may move between different groups routinely to share skills.	Movement between groups is very limited, but skill sharing is still important.
Goal with regard to general populace	Likely to announce in advance to maximize attention and media coverage. May target areas where enemy is strongest and most concentrated (i.e., demonstrations in financial districts). May hope to mobilize citizens or gain broader support.	No advance announcement, or perhaps disinformation about upcoming actions. Targets areas where enemy is weakest or most diffuse. Is not concerned with support of the majority, but may want to increase network of sympathizers. Hopes to avoid reprisals carried out on general population.

The differences between aboveground and underground organizing are expressed in every facet of a group's structure and practice. Some of these differences are summarized in the table.

Within both aboveground and underground activism there are several templates for basic organizational structures. It is important to understand the pros, cons, and capabilities of the spectrum of different organizations that comprise effective resistance movements.

The simplest "unit" of resistance is the individual. Individual aboveground activists can affect big changes at times, but they usually work by engaging other people or institutions. Underground individuals don't have anyone who can betray their secrets under interrogation, but nor do they have anyone to watch their back.

The most basic organizational unit is the affinity group. A group of fewer than a dozen people is a good compromise between groups too large to be socially functional, and too small to carry out important tasks.

The underground affinity group has many benefits for the members. Members can specialize in different areas of expertise, pool their efforts, work together toward shared goals, and watch each others' backs. However, if one member of the group is compromised, the entire affinity group is likely to be compromised.

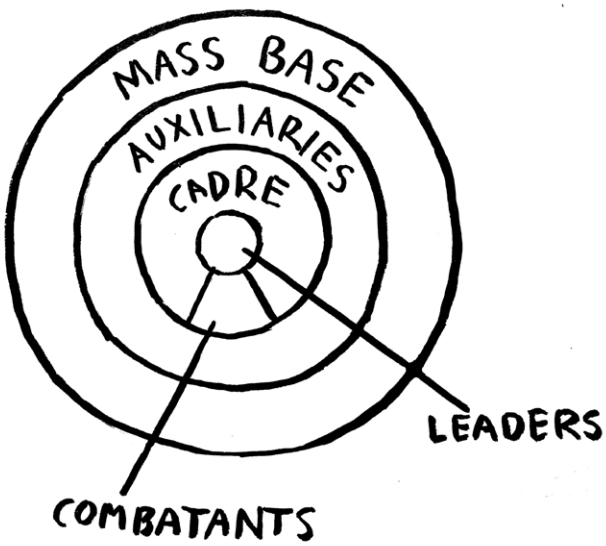
Aboveground affinity groups share many of the same clear benefits of a small-scale, deliberate community. Members may easily belong to more than one affinity group to follow their own interests and passions.

The obvious benefit of multiple overlapping above-ground groups is the formation of larger movements or "mesh" networks. These larger, diverse groups are better able to get a lot done, and can be fantastic for sharing information or finding new contacts, although sometimes they can have coordination or unity problems if they grow beyond a certain size. However, for a group concerned about security issues, this type of organization is a disaster.

Underground groups that want to bring larger numbers of people into the organization must take a different approach. A security-conscious underground network will largely consist of a number of different cells with limited connections to other cells. Like all underground groups, it has a firewall between itself and the above-ground. But there are also different, internal firewalls between sections.

As well as belonging to different groups, members of a resistance movement can be divided into five general classes: leaders; cadres or professional revolutionaries; combatants or front-line activists; auxiliaries; and the mass base. Although the terminology stems from armed struggle, the basic division of roles can apply to any group that wants to confront and dismantle oppressive systems of power.

Leaders are those who work to organize and inspire the organization, either as administrators or ideologues, and serve important decision-making roles.



Cadres or professional revolutionaries form the backbone of a resistance organization. Cadres have the skills needed to operate and perpetuate a resistance organization, and they carry out their resistance work as professionals, regardless of how they make their income.

Most people who take on this role in community groups are called "organizers" or the like, but you can recognize them when you see them by their commitment, their experience, and their work ethic.

Combatants or front-line activists are those who engage in direct confrontation and conflict with power. They are, in a word, warriors. Combatants are usually a small (but essential) percentage of those involved in resistance. This could be anyone who does that work in conjunction with resistance organizations, from people who do tree-sits to people who confront and expose rapists. This kind of work can entail a very high level of risk, physical or otherwise. Some people have families or children who need their support, and some people simply aren't psychologically suited to the front-line role. The most effective combatants are those willing to give up their lives, whether through death or prison.

Auxiliaries are sympathizers, people living otherwise normal lives who offer moral or material support to more active members of the resistance.

They may provide funding, material support, shelter and safehouses, transportation, a pool of recruits, or healthcare and equipment maintenance. Auxiliaries may also pass information on to the resistance.

The mass base consists of the people who generally support or sympathize with the resistance, and follow its activities with interest, but who aren't organizationally involved and who don't offer direct material support.

The cracks in the façade of industrial civilization are inspiring more resistance. As that system breaks down further, resistance will become more feasible, more effective, and more necessary.

Chapter 9

Desicion Making

Just as aboveground and underground groups have very divergent ways of structuring themselves, they also have different ways of operating. The way that a group makes decisions is crucial, and determines how that group does almost everything else.

The more authoritarian methods of decision making—the hierarchies of businesses or the military—are common for a reason: they get things done. If we want to be effective as resisters, we have to decide what we want to get done, and pick a decision-making process suited to that job. The key issues are information and timeliness.

In a **permanent rank structure** there is an organized hierarchy with orderly promotions and a recognized chain of command. Military and paramilitary organizations use this approach because it holds together

even under extreme circumstances. Only one person needs to have all of the information to make a decision, and they needn't discuss the issue with anyone else. That way the information won't be spread around, and the decision can be made quickly. The downsides are abuses of power, the reinforcement of existing hierarchies, and a smaller pool of thinkers.

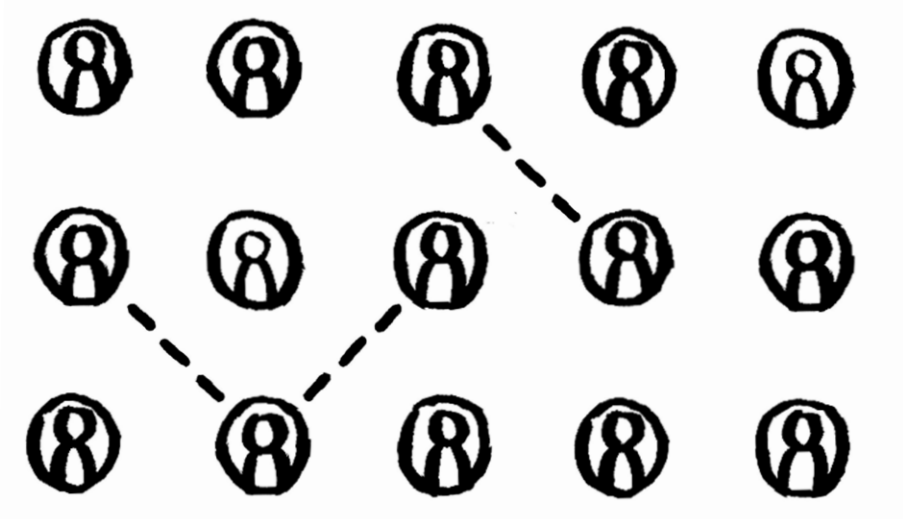
A hierarchy can be scaled to any size. The key lesson is that certain kinds of resistance—like armed resistance—only work when there a is hierarchy in place. If someone can't make tough decisions fast in an emergency, then people get killed.

A **dynamic rank structure** is a hierarchy with a difference; the hierarchy is not permanent. During an emergency action, one person might be in charge of giving orders. The rest of the time, another person might be in charge or the group might operate on a more participatory basis. This approach offers a compromise between the more rigid option above, and the lower participatory options below.

A **majority-rules system** is a good way to make decisions "democratically" in groups that don't have time for extensive discussion, or that are too large or heterogeneous to use the consensus model. For this system to work, everyone has to have enough knowledge and expertise about the matter at hand to make a good decision. This can be a solid approach for affinity groups, but is much less functional in underground networks. It's also too slow for emergencies.

Under the **consensus model**, every member of a group has to agree before a decision is made. As everyone is included in discussion, it can sometimes take a very long time to arrive at a decision. The more people and varied perspectives in a group, the harder it is to build consensus. Consensus requires that everyone involved have access to all available information. This makes it hard to keep secrets, and well nigh impossible to make tough decisions quickly.

All of these models have a place in resistance; the trick is to realize what that place is.



Chapter 10

Recruitment

Methods of outreach and recruitment vary depending on whether a group is aboveground or underground, how it is organized, and what role is being filled. There are really two kinds of recruitment, which you might call organizational and mutual recruitment. In organizational recruitment, an existing organization finds and inducts new members. In mutual recruitment, unorganized dissidents find each other, and forge a new resistance group.

It's relatively easy for aboveground groups to engage in outreach and to publicize their politics and actions. Underground groups need a somewhat more involved recruitment procedure, largely for security reasons, and they have a much smaller pool of potential recruits.

Someone who is considering serious underground resistance should keep a low profile: avoid prominent, militant aboveground action; it's important not to draw unwanted attention in advance. That doesn't mean that people should stop being activists or stop being political, but militant aboveground action is a definite disqualifier for underground action. Budding activists need to be told that there is a choice to be made between aboveground and underground action.

Stages of Recruitment

There are three basic stages of recruitment. The first is outreach or "prospecting," in which a group tries to make contact with potential recruits (and make their pitch). The second is screening or selection, in which the available candidate pool is winnowed down and the best recruits are chosen. In the third and final phase, those recruits are offered training and integrated into the organization.

Outreach

If specific skills and attributes are needed, it is necessary to go out and find those people, often in more peripheral parts of the resistance movement, and make the pitch. A good pitch has four distinct parts.

First, recruiters should hit their high points and explain the benefits of joining up: social benefits, self-actualization, and making a difference in the world. Speaking with a person who has experience in the organization can help convince the candidate, as can testimonials.

Second, the appeal needs to hit at a deep emotional level, not just an intellectual one. Recruiters are after the small minority of people who are predisposed to resist. They don't have to create new feelings; they just have to evoke or release strong feelings already present in the candidates.

Third, recruiters must address any concerns or anxieties. Lastly, the recruiter offers next steps to the candidate.

Recruitment is only one side of the membership equation; the other side is activist retention. Many things can keep activists going, like success, camaraderie, and a sense of momentum. Activists need emotional support and morale boosting, especially when things are not going well. Good work and long-term commitment should be recognized and celebrated.

People who criticize or engage in cliquishness should be politely told to cut it out, as this behavior can cause the group to self-destruct in the sort of way that causes lasting animosity and bitterness. You are much less likely to have these kinds of problems if you screen people in the first place.

Screening and Selection

All groups should engage in some screening of recruits (formally or informally), the underground being especially vigilant. There are many different screening methods, only some of which will be used by any given group. In roughly sequential order, these methods include:

• Outreach pre-screening / prospecting to look for indicators that the candidate has promise, such as pre-existing skills, and a history of participating in action against those in power.

• Physical checks for listening devices, police union cards, and the like.

• Vouching or references

• Background checks

• Surveillance or tailing

• Lifestyle or habit checks / warning signs: such as drug addiction, and irresponsible, impulsive or abusive behavior that would put the group at risk.

• Interview or political screening: Candidates may be asked questions about their politics, or they may be asked to study and agree with certain materials, points of unity, or conduct.

• Intuition and trust

• Test task

• Induction and oath: In armed groups, the consequence for collaboration has almost universally been death.

• Evaluation period

Be absolutely certain that a candidate is suitable and trustworthy before inviting the person to join. Underground groups cannot "disinvite" someone who knows who and where they are.

Recruits must have the psychological balance required to deal with stressful situations, and the social skills needed to work in a close cell or affinity group. Members of an underground resistance should also be willing to go to jail if needed.

Recruit Training and Enculturation

New recruits need cultural training, that is, they need to develop a shared culture with the other members of their group so that everyone can work together smoothly. They also need training in the specific skills needed for their work. This suggests the need for a sort of "basic training for activists," which would be generally available—and strongly encouraged—for people who want to be part of a culture of resistance. Skills that are legal and should be ubiquitous in a culture of resistance include the following:

• Anti-oppression analysis and training

• Group facilitation, decision-making, conflict resolution, crisis intervention

• Basic history of resistance

• Basic grounding in resistance organizational styles and strategies

• Basic off-the-grid and survival skills

• First Aid

• Reinforcement of culture of resistance norms and attributes

• Physical training and self-defense

• Communications including secure communications

If these skills become commonplace in resistance cultures, cadres can focus on training the particular skills needed for their strategy and tactics.

Chapter 11

Security

We live in an age of escalating political persecution, and we shouldn't expect that to go away. The more effective and serious a resistance movement becomes, the harsher the persecution of its members and their allies will be. Those working aboveground have more to be concerned about than those working underground, because the people working aboveground are more accessible to those in power.

Activists can combat this problem through the use of a collective security culture, which is "a culture where people know their rights and, more importantly, assert them."

The must-read booklet Security Culture: A Handbook for Activists identifies six main topics that are inappropriate to discuss. These are:

• Your involvement or someone else's involvement with an underground group.

• Someone else's desire to get involved with such a group.

• Asking others if they are a member of an underground group.

• Your or someone else's participation in an illegal action.

• Someone else's advocacy for such actions.

• Your or someone else's plans for a future action.

The key issue here comes from talking about specifics. Talking about particular people, groups, places, times, targets, events, and other specifics is a bad idea, even if it is a joke, gossip, or speculation. This is different from speaking about resistance or illegal activities in abstract or general terms. As the handbook states, "It is perfectly legal, secure, and desirable that people speak out in support of monkeywrenching and all forms of resistance."

The exceptions to this rule are: if you are planning an action with trusted members of your affinity group in a secure fashion, anonymous communiqués to the media, and disseminating information about specific tactics and targets between cells.

Security breaches happen when people gossip or speculate about who performed certain actions, or ask inappropriately. Sometimes people will lie or brag about their involvement in illegal activities. All of these behaviors are foolish if not downright stupid and dangerous. Some people in the Green Scare were arrested and put in jail because they or their comrades made security violations like these. People who do this act, in effect, as unwitting informers.

If you encounter these behaviors, the first response can be to educate. Explain what they did and why security culture is important, and point them toward further resources on the subject. Don't let violations pass or become habit. Some people may become chronic violators, and only effective way to deal with them is to cut them off from sources of information.

•••

People involved in resistance must know their basic legal rights. There are many free pamphlets suited to many different countries. The booklet "If an Agent Knocks: Federal Investigators and Your Rights" is a good start for the US.

If you believe you are being followed or watched, or if you are contacted by the police, report this to others in your activist community. After you are contacted, write down the names of the agents who spoke to you, what they said, as many questions as you can remember, and anything else that seems important. It's worth studying the investigative and interrogation techniques used by police.

Firewalls

It is crucial that a firewall exist between those carrying out underground activities and those doing aboveground work. Internal firewalls should also be in place between compartmentalized portions of an underground organization. Information should only cross these firewalls under very narrow and circumscribed conditions.

The firewall also applies to other types of non-political crime. Underground activists should avoid breaking other laws, to avoid risking the attention of police. People who hope to go underground should consider keeping a low profile, which means not leaving a "paper trail" (or, in the case of online records, a digital trail) which would make someone seem suspicious or of interest.

Chapter 12

Introduction to Strategy

Anarchist Michael Albert, in his memoir *Remembering Tomorrow*: *From SDS to life after capitalism*, writes, "In seeking social change, one of the biggest problems I have encountered is that activists have been insufficiently strategic." While it's true, he notes, that various progressive movements "did just sometimes enact bad strategy," in his experience they "often had no strategy at all."

It would be an understatement to say that this inheritance is a huge problem for resistance groups. One major reason that resistance strategy is underdeveloped is because thinkers and planners who do articulate strategies are often attacked for doing so. People can always find something to disagree with. If a movement depends more on ideological purity than it does on accomplishments, it's easy for internal sectarian arguments to take priority over getting things done.

The good news is that we can learn from a few resistance groups with successful and well-articulated strategies. The fundamentals of strategy are foundational for military officers, as they must be for resistance cadres and leaders.

Principles of War and Strategy

The US Army Field Manual on Operations introduces nine "Principles of War." These core concepts are:

Objective. "Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective." A clear goal is a prerequisite to selecting a strategy.

Offensive. "Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative." To seize the initiative is to determine the course of battle, the place, and the nature of conflict. Too often resistance groups, especially those based on lobbying or demands, give up the initiative to those in power.

Mass. "Concentrate the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time." Where the Field Manual says "combat power," we can say "force" more generally. We must engage those in power where we are strong and they are weak. We have limited numbers and limited force, so we have to use that when and where it will be most effective.

Economy of Force. "Allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts."

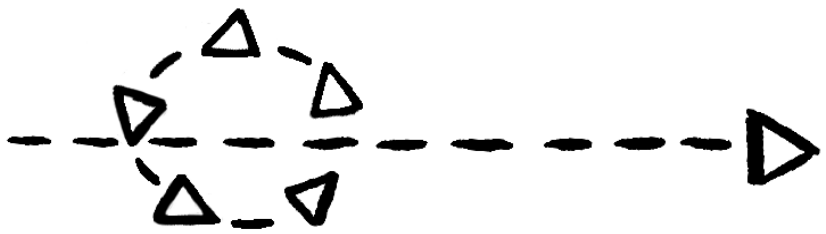
Maneuver. "Place the enemy in a disadvantageous position through the flexible application of combat power." This hinges on mobility and flexibility, which are essential for asymmetric conflict.

Unity of Command. "For every objective, ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander." This is where some streams of anarchist culture come up against millennia of strategic advice. No strategy can be implemented by consensus under dangerous or emergency circumstances. That's why the anarchist columns in the Spanish Civil War had officers even though they despised rulers.

Security. "Never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage." When fighting in a panopticon, this principle becomes even more important.

Surprise. "Strike the enemy at a time or place or in a manner for which they are unprepared." This is key to asymmetric conflict—and again, not especially compatible with an open or participatory decision-making structure.

Simplicity. "Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and clear, concise orders to ensure thorough understanding."



Many of these basic principles fall into conflict with the favored actions of dissidents. Protest marches, petitions, letter writing, and so on often lack a decisive or attainable objective, give the initiative to those in power, fail to concentrate force at a decisive juncture, put excessive resources into secondary efforts, limit maneuvering ability, lack unified command for the objective (such as there is), have mixed implementation of security, and typically offer no surprise. They are, however, simple plans, if that's any consolation.

In the US Field Manual on Guerrilla Warfare, the authors go further than the general principles of war to kindly describe the specific proper ties of successful asymmetric conflict. Six key characteristics must be in place for resistance operations:

Planning. "Careful and detailed... plans provide for the attack of selected targets and subsequent operations designed to exploit the advantage gained... Additionally, alternate targets are designated to allow subordinate units a degree of flexibility in taking advantage of sudden changes in the tactical situation." The point is to plan well enough that they have the flexibility to improvise.

Intelligence. "The basis of planning is accurate and up-to-date intelligence."

Decentralized Execution. A centralized plan allows separate cells to carry out their work independently but still accomplish something through coordination and building toward long-term objectives.

Surprise. "Attacks are executed at unexpected times and places. Set patterns of action are avoided. Maximum advantage is gained by attacking enemy weaknesses."

Short Duration Action. "Usually, combat operations of guerrilla forces are marked by action of short duration against the target followed by a rapid withdrawal of the attacking force. Prolonged combat action from fixed positions is avoided."

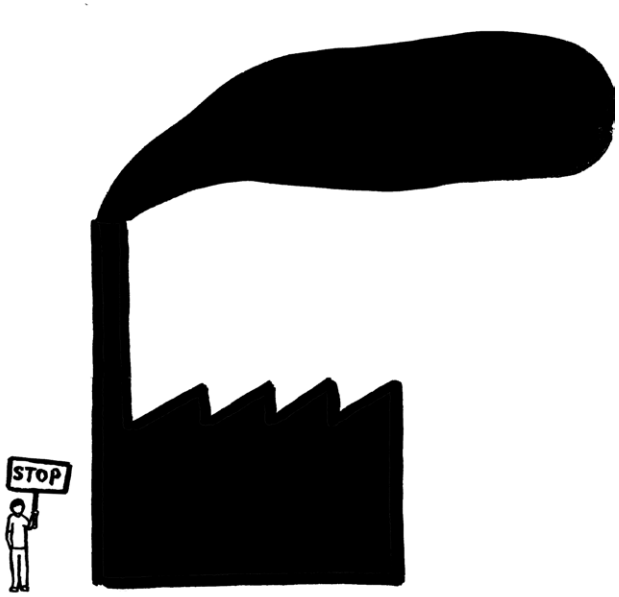
Multiple Attacks. "Another characteristic of guerrilla combat operations is the employment of multiple attacks over a wide area by small units tailored to the individual missions." When those in power don't know where an attack will come, they must spend effort to defend every single potential target.

Just as asymmetric strategies require specific characteristics for success, they also have definite limitations. Resistance forces typically have "limited capabilities for static defensive or holding operations." Another limitation is that, especially in the beginning, resistance forces lack "formal training, equipment, weapons, and supplies" that would allow them to undertake large-scale operations. This can be gradually remedied through ongoing recruitment and training, and good logistics. Communications offer another set of limitations. Communications in under ground groups are often difficult, limited, and slow.

Devising Strategy

Despite the limitations created by their smaller numbers, resistance movements do have real strategic choices. Resisters can and must do far better than the strategy of the status quo.

At the highest strategic level, any resistance movement has several general templates from which to choose. It may choose a war of containment, in which it attempts to slow or stop the spread of the opponent. It may choose a war of disruption, in which it targets systems to undermine their power. It may choose a war of public opinion, by which to win the populace over to their side. But the main strategy of the left, and of associated movements, has been a kind of war of attrition, a war in which the strategists hope to win by slowly eroding away the personnel and supplies of the other side. Of course, this strategy has been an abysmal failure.



A movement that wanted to win would abandon the strategy of moral attrition. It would identify the most vulnerable targets those in power possess. It would strike directly and decisively at their infrastructure—physical, economic, political—and do it while there is still a planet left.

Strategy and tactics form a continuum; there's no clear dividing line between them. If resistance action is a tree, the tactics are spreading branches and leaves, finely divided and numerous, while the strategy is the trunk, providing stability, cohesion, and rootedness. If resisters ignore the necessity and value of strategy, like many would-be resistance groups do, then they don't have a tree, they have loose branches, tumbleweed blowing this way and that with changing winds.

Conceptually, strategy is simple. First understand the context: where are we, what are our problems? Then, develop the goal(s): where do we want to be? Identify the priorities. Now figure out what actions are needed to get from point A to point B. Finally, identify the resources, people, and specific operations needed to carry out those activities.

Now it's time to proceed to the operational and tactical side of this strategy. According to the US Army Field Manual on Operations, all operations fit into one of three "all encompassing" categories: decisive, sustaining, or shaping.

Decisive operations "are those that directly accomplish the task" or objective at hand.

Sustaining operations "are operations at any echelon that enable shaping and decisive operations" by offering direct support to those other operations. These supporting operations might include funding or logistical support, communications, security, or other aid and services.

Shaping operations "create and preserve conditions for the success of the decisive operation." They alter the circumstances of the conflict and help bring about the conditions required for victory. Shaping operations could include information campaigns, or helping to develop a culture of resistance that values effective action and refuses to collaborate.

If you look at the taxonomy of action chart, you'll see that the actions on the left consist mostly of shaping operations, the actions at center-right consist mostly of sustaining operations, and the right-most actions are generally decisive.

These categories are used for a reason. Every effective tactic must fall into one or more of these categories. If it doesn't, then successful resisters don't waste time on that tactic.

Learning from Nonviolent Strategy

It's also worth looking at the principles that guide strategic nonviolence. Effective nonviolent organizing is not a pacifist attempt to convince the state of the error of its ways, but a vigorous, aggressive application of force that uses a subset of tactics different from those of military engagements.

Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, in their book *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*: *The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century*, offer twelve strategic principles in nonviolent resistance movements. They class these as principles of development, principles of engagement, and principles of conception.

Their **principles of development** are as follows:

Formulate functional objectives. "All competent strategy derives from objectives that are well chosen, defined, and understood. Yet it is surprising how many groups in conflict fail to articulate their objectives in anything but the most abstract terms." If the ultimate strategic goal is something that would require a prolonged and ongoing effort, the strategy should be subdivided into multiple intermediate goals.

Develop organizational strength. "To create new groups or turn preexisting groups and institutions into efficient fighting organizations" is a key task for strategists. They also have to organize themselves effectively to deal with threats to organizational strength, specifically "opportunists, free-riders, collaborators, misguided enthusiasts who break ranks with the dominant strategy, and would-be peacemakers who may press for premature accommodation."

Secure access to critical material resources. They identify two main reasons for setting up effective logistical systems: for physical survival and operations of the resisters, and to enable the resistance movement to disentangle itself from the dominant culture so that various noncooperation activities can be undertaken. In particular, they suggest stockpiling communications equipment.

Cultivate external assistance. Combating an enemy with global power requires as many allies and as much solidarity as resisters can rally.

Expand the repertoire of sanctions, which means to expand the diversity of tactics the movement is capable of carrying out effectively.

Their second group of principles consists of **principles of engagement**:

Attack the opponents' strategy for consolidating control. Ensure that any repression or coercion those in power attempt to carry out is made difficult and expensive by the resistance.

Mute the impact of the opponent's violent weapons. We can see several ways of doing this: get out of harm's way, take the sting out of the agents of violence, disable the weapons, prepare people for the worst effects of violence, and reduce the strategic importance of what may be lost to violence."

Alienate opponents from expected bases of support. Ackerman and Kruelger suggest using "political jiujitsu" so that the violent actions of those in power are used to undermine their support.

Maintain nonviolent discipline. "Keeping nonviolent discipline is neither an arbitrary nor primarily a moralistic choice. It advances the conduct of strategy." Regardless of what tactics are used, it's clear that they should be used only when appropriate in the larger strategy.

Their third and final group is the **principles of conception:**

Assess events and options in light of levels of strategic decision making. Planning should be done on the basis of context and the big picture to identify the strategy and tactics used.

Adjust offensive and defensive operations according to the relative vulnerabilities of the protagonists.

Sustain continuity between sanctions, mechanisms, and objectives. There must be a sensible continuum from the goals, to the strategy, to the tactics used.

There are clearly elements of this that are less appropriate for taking down civilization, and there are many things about which I would disagree with Ackerman and Kruegler. What I take away from their principles is that effective strategy is guided by the same general principles regardless of the particular tactics it employs.

Evaluating Strategy

Resistance is not one-sided. For any strategy resisters can come up with, those in power will do whatever they can to disrupt and undermine it. A strategic objective is a moving target, and there is an intrinsic delay in implementing any strategy. Don't aim for where the target is; aim for where it's going to be.

Too often we as activists of whatever stripe don't do this. We're worried about the global warming that's happening now, but to avert current climate change, we should have acted thirty years ago. Mainstream environmentalism in particular is decades behind the target, advocating for tiny changes that don't reflect the seriousness of our current situation, let alone the situation thirty years from now. If we can't avert global ecological collapse, then centuries of social justice gains will go down the toilet.

If we want to be effective strategists, we must be capable of planning into the long term, and plan for setbacks and disruptions. We must prepare for the changing nature of our fight six months down the road, two years down the road, ten years down the road, and beyond.

How does anyone evaluate a particular strategy? There are several key characteristics to check, based on everything we've covered in this chapter.

Objective. Does the strategy have a well-defined and attainable objective? If there is no clear objective there is no strategy. The objective doesn't have to be a static endpoint—it can be a progressive change or a process.

Feasibility. Can the organization A to B it? Does the strategy have a clear path from the current context to the desired objective? Does the plan include contingencies to deal with setbacks or upsets?

Resource Limitations. Does the movement or organization have the number of people with adequate skills and competence required to carry out the strategy?

Tactics. Are the required tactics available? Are the tactics and operations called for by the plan adequate to the scale, scope, and seriousness of the objective?

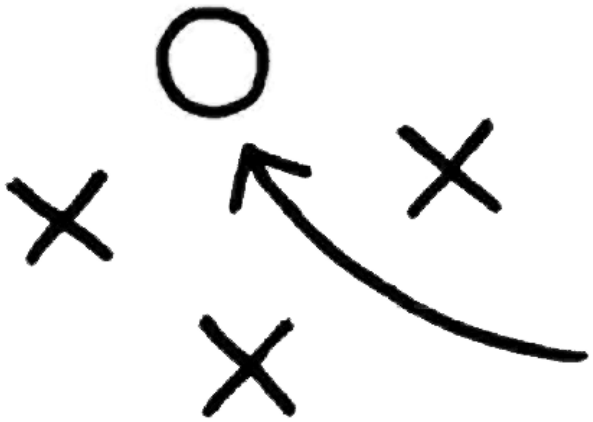
Risk. Is the level of risk required to carry out the plan acceptable given the importance of the objective? Remember, this goes both ways. It is important to ask, what is the risk of acting? as well as what is the risk of not acting? If the objective of the strategy is to prevent catastrophic global warming, taking serious action may indeed seem risky—but the consequences of insufficient action are far more severe.

Timeliness. Can the plan accomplish its objective within a suitable timeframe? Are events to happen in a reasonable sequence? A strategy that takes too long may be worse than useless, and become actively harmful by drawing people or resources from more effective and timely strategic alternatives.

Simplicity and Consistency. Is the plan simple and consistent? The plan should not depend on a large number of prerequisites or complex chains of events. Only simple plans work in emergencies.

Consequences. What are the other consequences or effects of this strategy beyond the immediate objective and operations? Does the value of the objective outweigh the cost of those consequences?

A solid grand strategy is essential, but it's not enough. Any strategy is made out of smaller tactical building blocks. In the next chapter we outline the tactics that an effective resistance movement might use, and discuss how such a movement might select targets and plan effective actions.



Chapter 13

Tactics and Targets

Recall that all operations—and hence all tactics—can be divided into three categories:

• Decisive operations, which directly accomplish the objective.

•Sustaining operations, which directly assist and support those carrying out decisive operations.

• Shaping operations, which help to create the conditions necessary for success.

Where tactics fall depends on the strategic goal. In this chapter we'll break down aboveground and underground tactics into the three operational categories.

Aboveground Tactics

Broadly speaking, aboveground tactics are those that can be carried out openly—in other words, where the gain in publicity or networking outweighs the risk of reprisals. Underground tactics, in contrast, are those where secrecy is needed to carry out the actions to avoid repression or simply to do the actions. The dividing line between underground and aboveground can move. Its position depends on two things: the social and political context, and the audacity of the resisters.

There have been times when sabotage and property destruction have been carried out openly. Conversely, there have been times when even basic education and organizing had to happen underground to avoid repression or reprisals. One of the most important jobs of radicals is to push actions across the line from underground to aboveground. That way, more people and larger organizations are able to use what was once a fringe tactic.

Provoking open defiance of the laws or rules in question also impairs the ability of elites to exercise their power. If enough people disobey as part of their daily activities, then the country becomes ungovernable; there aren't enough police to force everyone to perform their jobs at gunpoint.

The case of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X exemplifies how a strong militant faction can enhance the effectiveness of less-militant tactics. In advocating for militant tactics, Malcolm X made King's demands seem eminently reasonable, by pushing the boundaries of what the status quo would consider extreme.

It isn't just militants who can push the boundaries; even nonviolent groups can and should be pushing the envelope for militancy—vocally and through their actions—wherever and whenever possible. In this way, and many others, aboveground and underground activists are mutually supportive and work in tandem.

Decisive Operations Aboveground

Open property destruction as a decisive aboveground tactic is historically rare. Remember, those in power view their property as being more important than the lives of those below them on civilization's hierarchy. If large amounts of their property are being destroyed openly, they have few qualms about using violent retaliation.

Aboveground acts of omission are the more common tactical choice. An individual's reduced consumption is not decisive, and well-meaning personal conservation may simply make supplies more available to those who would put them to the worst use, like militaries and corporate industry. But large-scale conservation could reduce the rate of damage slightly.

The expropriation or reclamation of land and materiel can be very effective decisive action when the numbers, strategy, and political situation are right. The Landless Workers Movement in Latin America has been highly

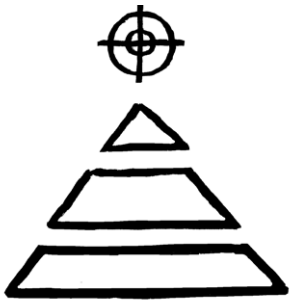
successful at reclaiming "underutilized" land. Many indigenous communities around the world engage in direct re-occupation and reclamation of land.

Sustaining Operations Aboveground

Aboveground sustaining operations mostly revolve around solidarity, both moral and material. Legal and prisoner support are important ways of supporting direct action. So are other kinds of material support, fundraising, and logistical aid.

Propaganda and agitation supporting a particular campaign or struggle are other important sustaining actions. Liberation struggles like those in South Africa and Palestine have been defended internationally by vocal activists and organizers over decades. This propaganda has increased support for those struggles (both moral and material) and made it more difficult for those in power to repress resisters.

Larger organizations can undertake sustaining operations like fundraising and recruitment on a larger scale. They may also do a better job of training or enculturation.



Shaping Operations Aboveground

One of the most important shaping operations is building a culture of resistance. On an individual level, this might mean cultivating the revolutionary character—learning from resisters of the past, and turning their lessons into habit to gain the psychological and analytical tools needed for effective action. Building a culture of resistance goes hand in hand with education, awareness-raising, and propaganda. It also ties into support work and building alternatives, especially concrete political and social alternatives to the status quo. As always, every action must be tied into the larger resistance strategy.

Underground Tactics

Some tactics depend on secrecy and security, so are almost always limited to the underground: clandestine intelligence, escape, sabotage and attacks on materiel, attacks on troops, intimidation, and assassination.

It's true that harm can be caused through sabotage, and that sabotage can be a form of violence. But allowing a machine to operate can also be more violent than sabotaging it. How many living creatures does a drift net kill as it passes through the ocean? Destroying a drift

net would save countless lives, so is clearly a nonviolent act. You could argue that not sabotaging a drift net (providing you had the means and opportunity) is a profoundly violent act—violent on a massive, ecological scale. We could make a similar argument for most any industrial machinery.

You're opposed to violence? So where's your monkey wrench?

Sabotage is not categorically violent, but attacks on troops, intimidation, assassination, and the like may involve violence on the part of resisters. These tactics have been used to great effect by a great many resistance movements in history.

Attacks on troops are common where a politically conscious population lives under overt military occupation. For these attacks to happen successfully, they must follow the basic rules of asymmetric conflict and general good strategy.

There's a world of difference—socially, organizationally, psychologically—between fighting the occupation of a foreign government and the occupation of a domestic one. Most people make no distinction between the people living in their country and the government of that country, which is why the news will say "America pulls out of climate talks" when they are talking about the US government. This psychology is why millions of Vietnamese people took up arms against the American invasion, but only a handful of Americans took up arms against that invasion. It explains why most Germans didn't even support theoretical resistance against Hitler a decade after the war.

This doesn't bode well for resistance in the minority world. People in poorer countries may be able to rally against foreign corporations and colonial dictatorships, but those in the center of empire contend with power structures that most people consider natural, familiar, even friendly. But these domestic institutions of power—be they corporate or governmental—are just as foreign, and just as destructive, as an invading army.

Intimidation is another tactic related to violence that is usually conducted underground. This tactic is used by the "Gulabi Gang" of Uttar Pradesh state in India. The Gulabi Gang formed as a response to domestic and sexual violence and caste-based discrimination. They've stopped child marriages. They've beaten up men who perpetrate domestic violence. The gang forced the police to register crimes against Untouchables by slapping police officers until they complied. Their hundreds of members practice self-defense with the lathi (a traditional Indian stick or staff weapon). It's no surprise their ranks are growing. The Gulabi Gang is so popular and effective in part because they openly defy abuses of male power, so the effect on both men and women is very large. Their aboveground defiance rallies more support than they could by causing abusive men to die in a series of mysterious accidents.

It's important to acknowledge the distinction between intimidation and terrorism. Terrorism consists of violent attacks on civilians. Resistance intimidation directly targets those responsible for oppressive and exploitative acts and power structures, and lets those people know that there are consequences for their actions. Rape and domestic abuse are terrorism; they're sense-

less and unprovoked acts of violence against unarmed civilians. The intimidation of rapists or domestic abusers is one tactic that can be used to stop their violence while employing the minimum amount of violence possible.

No resistance movement wants to engage in needless cycles of violence and retribution with those in power. But a refusal to employ violent tactics when they are appropriate will very likely lead to more violence.

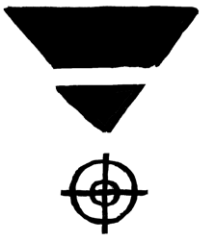
This leads us to the last major underground tactic: assassination. In talking about assassination (or any attack on humans) in the context of resistance, two key questions must be asked. First, is the act strategically beneficial, that is, would assassination further the strategy of the group? Second, is the act morally just, given the person in question? (The issue of justice is necessarily particular to the target; it's assumed that the broader strategy incorporates aims to increase justice.)

Decisive Operations Underground

Individuals working underground focus mostly on small-scale acts of sabotage and subversion that make the most of their skill and opportunity. It's ideal for their actions to appear like an accident, unless the nature of the action requires otherwise. Individual saboteurs are more effective with some informal coordination—if,

for example, a general day of action has been called. It also helps if the individuals seize an opportunity by springing into action when those in power are already off balance or under attack.

Underground networks can accomplish decisive operations that require greater coordination, numbers, and geographic scope. With synchronization between even a handful of groups, these underground networks can make an entire economy grind to a halt.



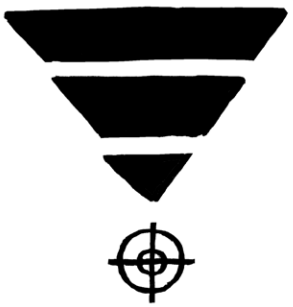
Sustaining Operations Underground

Recruitment is key in underground sustaining operations. A single cell can gather or steal equipment and supplies for itself, but it can't participate in wider sustaining operations unless it forms a network by recruiting organizationally, training new members and auxiliaries, and extending into new cells.

Aboveground groups and the underground can work together on the same strategy without direct coordination. If a popular aboveground campaign against a big box store or unwanted new industrial site fails, an underground group can damage or destroy the facility under construction. Sometimes people argue that there's no point in sabotaging anything, because those in power will just build it again. But there may come a day when those in power start to say "there's no point in building it—they'll just burn it down again."

Underground cells may also run a safehouse or safehouses for themselves and allies.

Underground networks may be large enough to create "areas of persistence" where they exert a sizeable influence and have developed an underground infrastructure rooted in a culture of resistance. The Zapatistas in Mexico exert considerable influence in Chiapas, so much so that they can post signs proclaiming "Here the people give the orders and the government obeys." The FMLN in El Salvador, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon have established areas of persistence.



Shaping Operations Underground

Shaping operations for the underground include general counterintelligence and security work. Ferreting out and removing informers and infiltrators is a key step in allowing resistance organizations of every type to grow and resistance strategies to succeed. Underground cells can also carry out some specialized propaganda operations, such as underground newspapers and forms of pirate radio.

Underground groups may also want to carry out certain high-profile or spectacular "demonstration" actions to demonstrate that underground resistance is possible and that it is happening, and to offer a model for a particular tactic or target to be emulated by others. But, in general, underground groups must get their job done by being as decisive as possible.

Target Selection

A good tactic used on a poor target has little effect. The Field Manual on Guerrilla Warfare identifies four "important factors related to the target which influence its final selection." These criteria are meant specifically for targets to be disrupted or destroyed. The four criteria are as follows:

Criticality. How important is this target to the enemy and to enemy operations? "Such targets as bridges, tunnels, ravines, and mountain passes are critical to lines of communication; engines, ties, and POL [petroleum, oil, and lubricant] stores are critical to transportation." Resistance movements (and the military) look for bottlenecks when selecting a target. Multiple concurrent surprise attacks are ideal for resistance movements, and can cause cascading failures.

Vulnerability. How tough is the target? In military terminology, a "soft target" is one that is relatively vulnerable, while a "hard target" is well defended or fortified.

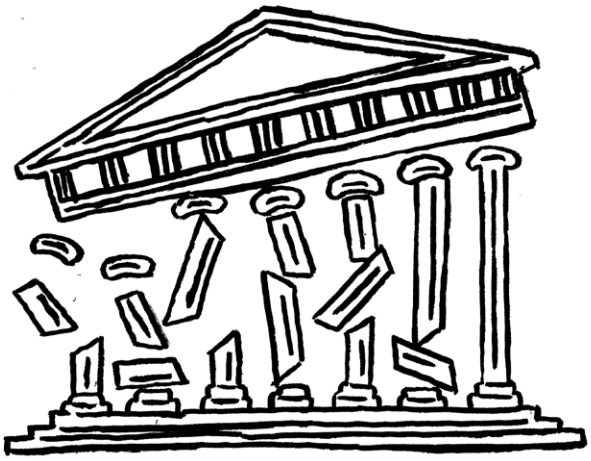
Accessibility. How easy is it to get near the target?

Recuperability. How much effort would it take to rebuild or replace the target? Specialized installations, hard-to-find parts, or people with special unique skills are difficult to replace. Undermining enemy recuperability can be done with good planning and multiple attacks.

From this perspective the ideal target would be highly critical (such that damage would cause cascading systems failures), highly vulnerable, very accessible, and difficult and time-consuming to repair or replace. It's rare to find a perfect target. It's more likely that choosing among targets will require certain tradeoffs.
If those in power are clever, they'll downplay the really damaging actions to make themselves seem invulnerable, but scream bloody murder over a smashed window in order to whip up public opinion.

These criteria for target selection go both ways. Our own resistance movements are targets for those in power, and it's important to understand our organizations as potential targets. Leaders have often been attacked because they were crucial to the organization.

Anyone who casts their lot with a resistance movement must be prepared for reprisals. People are arrested, detained, and killed—often in large numbers—when power strikes back. The sooner everyone understands that, the better prepared we all will be to handle it.



Chapter 14

Decisive Ecological Warfare

Bringing it Down: Collapse Scenarios

At this point in history, there are no good short-term outcomes for global human society. Some are better and some are worse, and in the long term some are very good, but in the short term we're in a bind. The only way to find the best outcome is to confront our dire situation head on, and not to be diverted by false hopes.

Human society—because of civilization, specifically—has painted itself into a corner. We long ago exceeded carrying capacity, and the workings of civilization are destroying that carrying capacity by the second. This is largely the fault of those in power, the wealthiest, the states and corporations. But the consequences—and the responsibility for dealing with it—fall to the rest of us, including nonhumans.

Physically, it's not too late for a crash program to limit births to reduce the population, cut fossil fuel consumption to nil, replace agricultural monocrops with perennial polycultures, end overfishing, and cease destruction of remaining wild areas. There's no physical reason we couldn't get together and fix these problems, in the sense that it isn't against the laws of physics. But socially and politically, we know this is a pipe dream. We aren't going to save the planet—or our own future as a species—without a fight.

What options are actually available to us, and what are the consequences? What follows are three broad and illustrative scenarios: one in which there is no substantive or decisive resistance, one in which there is limited resistance and a relatively prolonged collapse, and one in which all-out resistance leads to the immediate collapse of civilization and global industrial infrastructure.

No Resistance

If there is no substantive resistance, likely there will be a few more years of business as usual, though with increasing economic disruption and upset. Once peak oil sets in, the increasing cost and decreasing supply of energy undermines manufacturing and transportation, especially on a global scale.

The energy slide will cause economic turmoil, and a self-perpetuating cycle of economic contraction will take place. Businesses will be unable to pay their workers. Unable to pay their debts and mortgages, homeowners, companies, and even states will go bankrupt. International trade will nosedive. After a few years, the

financial limits will become physical ones; large-scale energy-in tensive manufacturing will become not only uneconomical, but impossible.

A direct result of this will be the collapse of industrial agriculture. At first this will cause a food and economic crisis mostly felt by the poor. Over time, the situation will worsen and industrial food production will fall below that required to sustain the population.

Most subsistence cultures will have been destroyed or uprooted from their land. Without well-organized resisters, land reform will not happen, and displaced people will not be able to access land. As a result, widespread hunger and starvation will become endemic in many parts of the world. The lack of energy for industrial agriculture will cause a resurgence in the institutions of slavery and serfdom.

Slavery does not occur in a political vacuum. Threatened by economic and energy collapse, some governments will fall entirely, and warlords will set up shop in the rubble. Others will turn to authoritarian forms of government. The rich will increasingly move to private and well-defended enclaves.

Meanwhile, the poor will see their own condition worsen. The millions of refugees created by economic and energy collapse will be on the move, but no one will want them. Desperate people will be the only candidates for the dangerous and dirty manual labor required to keep industrial manufacturing going once the energy supply dwindles. Hence, those in power will consider autonomous and self-sustaining communities a threat to their labor supply, and suppress or destroy them.

Technofascists will develop and perfect social control technologies: autonomous drones for surveillance and assassination; microwave crowd control devices; MRI-assisted brain scans that will allow for infallible lie detection, even mind reading and torture. The technofascists will make themselves more and more able to destroy resistance even in its smallest expression. As time passes, the window of opportunity for resistance will swiftly close.

The authoritarian governments will have more sway and more muscle, and will take resources from their neighbors and failed states as they please. There will be no one to stop them. It won't matter if you are the most sustainable eco-village on the planet if you live next door to an eternally resource-hungry fascist state.

Meanwhile, with industrial powers increasingly desperate for energy, the tenuous remaining environmental and social regulations will be cast aside. The worst of the worst, practices like offshore drilling, drilling in wildlife refuges, mountain-top removal for coal will become commonplace. Ecological damage will be long-term or permanent.

Investment in renewable industrial energy will also take place, although long-distance power transmission lines will be insufficient and crumbling from age. As a

result, electric renewables will only produce a tiny fraction of the energy produced by petroleum. There will some rationing to prevent riots, but most energy (regardless of the source) will go to governments, the military, corporations, and the rich.

Energy constraints will make it impossible to even attempt any full-scale infrastructure overhauls. Biofuels will take off in many areas, so remaining tropical forests will be massively logged to clear land for biofuel production. (Often, forests will be logged en masse simply to burn for fuel.) Heavy machinery will be too expensive for most plantations, so their labor will come from slavery, as is currently used in Brazil.

All of this will have immediate ecological consequences. The oceans will be mostly dead. The expansion of biofuels will destroy many remaining wild areas. Expanded logging and agriculture in tropical forests will cut transpiration and tip the balance toward permanent drought, which will be enough to kill any remaining forest. The Amazon and other tropical forests will turn into a desert.

It's almost certain that global warming would become self-perpetuating and catastrophic. Ecological remediation through perennial polycultures and forest replanting will become impossible. Northern forests will die from heat, pests, and disease, and then burn in continent-wide fires.

Resource wars between nuclear states will break out. With few resources to equip and field a mechanized army or air force, nuclear strikes will seem an increasingly effective action for desperate states.

Nuclear war or not, the long term prospects are dim. Global warming will continue to worsen long after the fossil fuels are exhausted. It's possible that large plants and animals might only be able to survive near the poles. It's also possible that the entire planet could become essentially uninhabitable to large plants and animals, with a climate more like Venus than Earth.

All that is required for this to occur is for current trends to continue without substantive and effective resistance. All that is required for evil to succeed is for good people to do nothing. But this future is not inevitable.

Limited Resistance

What if some forms of limited resistance were undertaken? What if there were a serious aboveground resistance movement combined with a small group of underground networks working in tandem? (This still would not be a majority movement—this is extrapolation, not fantasy.) What if those movements combined their grand strategy? The abovegrounders would work to build sustainable and just communities wherever they were, and struggle for social and ecological justice. Meanwhile, the undergrounders would engage in limited attacks on infrastructure. The overall thrust of this plan would be to use selective attacks to accelerate collapse in a deliberate way, like shoving a rickety building.

In this case there would be surgical attacks on energy infrastructure. These attacks would be designed to be effective but timed and targeted to minimize the amount of "collateral damage" on humans. They would mostly constitute forms of sabotage. They would be intended to cut fossil fuel consumption by some 30 percent within the first few years, and more after that. This would set in motion a process of political and infrastructural decentralization. It would also result in political repression and real violence targeting those resisters.

Meanwhile, aboveground groups would be making the most of the economic turmoil. There would be a growth in class consciousness and organization. Labor and poverty activists would increasingly turn to community sufficiency. The unemployed and underemployed—rapidly growing in number—would start to organize a subsistence and trade economy outside of capitalism. Mutual aid and skill sharing would be promoted. Mass organization and occupation of lands would force governments to cede unused land for allotments, massive community gardens, and cooperative subsistence farms.

The situation in many third world countries could actually improve because of the global economic collapse. Industrial agriculture would falter and begin to collapse. Hunger would be reduced by subsistence farming, but food would be more valuable and in shorter supply.

Even a 50 percent cut in fossil fuel consumption wouldn't cause widespread hunger and die off. Only a small fraction of fossil energy actually goes into basic subsistence, and even that is used inefficiently. A 50 percent decline in fossil energy could be readily adapted to from a subsistence perspective (if not financial one).

So if people are hungry or cold because of selective militant attacks on infrastructure, that will be a direct result of the actions of those in power, not of the resisters.

Right now most of the energy is being wasted on plastic junk, too-big houses for rich people, bunker buster bombs, and predator drones. The US military is the single biggest oil user in the world. The only way to ensure there is some oil left for basic survival transitions in twenty years is to ensure that it isn't being squandered now.

In some areas, increasingly abandoned suburbs (unlivable without cheap gas) would be taken over, as empty houses would become farmhouses, community centers and clinics. Goats would be grazed in parks, and many roads would be torn up and returned to pasture or forest. In some cases these communities would become relatively autonomous. People would have to resist vigorously whenever racism and xenophobia are used as excuses for injustice and authoritarianism.

Attacks on energy infrastructure would become more common as oil supplies diminish. These attacks would steepen the energy slide initially. The world population would peak sooner, and peak population would be smaller (by perhaps a billion) than it was in the no-resistance scenario.

The presence of an organized militant resistance movement would provoke a reaction from those in power. Authoritarians would seize power where they can, and try to in almost every country. However, they would be hampered by aboveground and underground resistance. In some countries, mass mobilizations would stop potential dictators.

There would still be refugees flooding out of many areas (including urban areas). Networks of autonomous subsistence communities would be able to accept and integrate some of these people.

The development of biofuels (and the fate of tropical forests) is uncertain. Serious militant resistance—in many cases insurgency and guerilla warfare— would be required to stop industrialists from turning tropical forests into plantations or extracting coal at any cost. In this scenario, resistance would still be limited, and it is questionable whether that level of militancy would be effectively mustered.

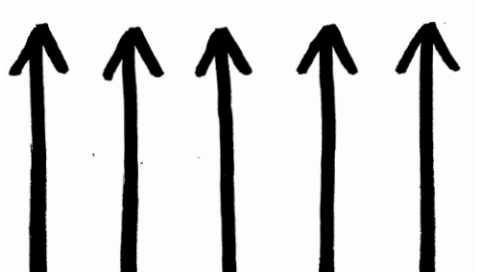
This means that the long term impacts of the greenhouse effect would be uncertain. Fossil fuel burning would have to be kept to an absolute minimum to avoid a runaway greenhouse effect. That could prove very difficult. But if a runaway greenhouse effect could be avoided, many areas could be able to recover rapidly. A return to perennial polycultures could help reverse the greenhouse effect. The oceans would look better quickly, aided by a reduction in industrial fishing and the end of the synthetic fertilizer runoff that creates so many dead zones now.

The likelihood of nuclear war would be much lower than in the no-resistance scenario. Overall resource consumption would be lower, so resource wars would be less likely to occur.

There are many ways in which this scenario is appealing. However, one problem is with the integration of aboveground and underground action. Most aboveground environmental organizations are currently opposed to any kind of militancy. This could hamper the possibility of strategic cooperation between underground militants and aboveground groups that could mobilize greater numbers. (It would also doom our aboveground groups to failure as their record so far demonstrates.)

It's also questionable whether the cut in fossil fuel consumption described here would be sufficient to avoid runaway global warming. If runaway global warming does take place, all of the beneficial work of the abovegrounders would be wiped out. The converse problem is that a steeper decline in fossil fuel consumption would very possibly result in significant human casualties and deprivation. It's also possible that the mobilization of large numbers of people to subsistence farming in a short time is unrealistic.

So while in some ways this scenario represents an ideal compromise—a win-win situation for humans and the planet—it could just as easily be a lose-lose situation without serious and timely action. That brings us to our last scenario, one of all-out resistance and attacks on infrastructure intended to guarantee the survival of a livable planet.



All-out attacks on infrastructure

In this final scenario, militant resistance would have one primary goal: to reduce fossil fuel consumption (and hence, all ecological damage) as immediately and rapidly as possible. A 90 percent reduction would be the ballpark target. For militants in this scenario, impacts on civilized humans would be secondary.

Here's their rationale in a nutshell: Humans aren't going to do anything in time to prevent the planet from being destroyed wholesale. The risk of runaway global warming is immediate. A drop in the human population is inevitable, and fewer people will die if collapse happens sooner. Delaying collapse, they argue, is itself a form of mass murder.

Furthermore, they would argue, humans are only one species of millions. To kill millions of species for the benefit of one is insane, just as killing millions of people for the benefit of one person would be insane. And since unimpeded ecological collapse would kill off humans anyway, those species will ultimately have died for nothing, and the planet will take millions of years to recover. Therefore, those of us who care about the future of the planet have to dismantle the industrial energy infrastructure as rapidly as possible. We'll all have to

deal with the social consequences as best we can. Besides, rapid collapse is ultimately good for humans because at least some people survive. Regardless, without immediate action, everyone dies.

In this scenario, well-organized underground militants would make coordinated attacks on energy infrastructure around the world. These would take whatever tactical form militants could muster—actions against pipelines, power lines, tankers and refineries, perhaps using electromagnetic pulses (EMPs) to do damage. The attacks would be as persistent as the militants could manage. Fossil fuel energy availability would decline by 90 percent. Greenhouse gas emissions would plummet.

The industrial economy would come apart. Manufacturing and transportation would halt because of frequent blackouts and tremendously high prices for fossil fuels. Some, perhaps most, governments would institute martial law and rationing. Governments that took an authoritarian route would be especially targeted by militant resisters.

In theory, with a 90 percent reduction in fossil fuel availability, there would still enough to aid basic survival activities like growing food, heating, and cooking. Most existing large-scale institutions would simply collapse, and it would be up to local people to either make a stand for human rights and a better way or give in to authoritarian power. The death rate would increase, but civic order can still hold despite the hardships.

If the attacks could persist and oil extraction were kept minimal for a prolonged period, industrial civilization would be unlikely to reorganize itself. For most areas, there would be no outside aid. Rural and traditional populations would be better placed to cope.

Those in power would be unable to project force over long distances, and would have to mostly limit their activities to nearby areas. This means that tropical biofuel plantations, tar sands and mountaintop removal coal mining would not be feasible. The construction of new large-scale infrastructure would simply not be possible.

Though the human population would decline, things would look good for virtually every other species. The oceans and wilderness areas would begin to recover rapidly. Runaway global warming would likely be averted. In fact, returning forests and grasslands would sequester carbon, helping to maintain a livable climate.

Nuclear war would be unlikely. Diminished populations and industrial activities would reduce competition between remaining states.

This scenario guarantees a future for both the planet and the human species. It would save trillions upon trillions upon trillions of living creatures. Yes, it would create hardship for the urban wealthy and poor, though most others would be better off immediately. It would be an understatement to call such a concept unpopular. There is also the question of plausibility. Could enough ecologically-motivated militants mobilize to enact this scenario? No doubt for many people the second, more moderate scenario seems both more appealing and more likely.

There is of course an infinitude of possible futures we could describe. We will describe one more possible future, a combination of the previous two, in which a resistance movement embarks on a strategy of Decisive Ecological Warfare.

Decisive Ecological Warfare Strategy

Goals

The ultimate goal of the primary resistance movement in this scenario is simply a living planet—a planet not just living, but in recovery, growing more alive and more diverse year after year. A planet on which humans live in equitable and sustainable communities without exploiting the planet or each other.

Given our current state of emergency, this translates into a more immediate goal, which is at the heart of this movement's grand strategy:

Goal 1: To disrupt and dismantle industrial civilization; to thereby remove the ability of the powerful to exploit the marginalized and destroy the planet.

This movement's second goal both depends on and assists the first:

Goal 2: To defend and rebuild just, sustainable, and autonomous human communities, and, as part of that, to assist in the recovery of the land.

To accomplish these goals requires several broad strategies involving large numbers of people in many different organizations, both aboveground and underground. The primary strategies needed in this theoretical scenario include the following:

Strategy A: Engage in direct militant actions against industrial infrastructure, especially energy infrastructure.

Strategy B: Aid and participate in ongoing social and ecological justice struggles; promote equality and undermine exploitation by those in power.

Strategy C: Defend the land and prevent the expansion of industrial logging, mining, construction, and so on, such that more intact land and species will remain when civilization does collapse.

Strategy D: Build and mobilize resistance organizations that will support the above activities, including decentralized training, recruitment, logistical support, and so on.

Strategy E: Rebuild a sustainable subsistence base for human societies (including perennial polycultures for food) and localized democratic communities that uphold human rights.

We should be clear that not all actions against infrastructure are of equal priority, efficacy, or moral acceptability to the resistance movements in this scenario. Some infrastructure is easy, some is hard, and some is harder.

Collapse, in the most general terms, is a rapid loss of complexity. It is a shift toward smaller and more decentralized structures—social, political, economic—with less social stratification, regulation, behavioral control and regimentation, and so on. Major mechanisms of collapse include (in no particular order):

• **Energy decline** as fossil fuel extraction peaks.

• **Industrial collapse** as global economies of scale are ruined by increasing transport and manufacturing costs, and by economic decline.

• **Economic collapse** as global corporate capitalism is unable to maintain growth and basic operations.

• **Climate change** causing ecological collapse, agricultural failure, hunger, refugees, disease, and so on.

• **Ecological collapse** of many different kinds driven by resource extraction, destruction of habitat, crashing biodiversity, and climate change.

• **Disease**, including epidemics and pandemics, caused by crowded living conditions and poverty, along with bacterial diseases increasingly resistance to antibiotics.

• **Food crises** caused by the displacement of subsistence farmers and destruction of local food systems, competition for grains by factory farms and biofuels, poverty, and physical limits to food production because of drawdown.

• **Drawdown** as the accelerating consumption of finite supplies of water, soil, and oil leads to rapid exhaustion of accessible supplies.

• **Political collapse** as large political entities break into smaller groups, secessionists break away from larger states, and some states go bankrupt or simply fail.

• **Social collapse** as resource shortages and political upheaval break large artificial group identities into smaller ones (sometimes based along class, ethnic, or regional affinities), often with competition between those groups.

• **War and armed conflict**, especially resource wars over remaining supplies of finite resources and internal conflicts between warlords and rival factions.

• **Crime and exploitation** caused by poverty and inequality, especially in crowded urban areas.

• **Disasters and refugee displacement** resulting from spontaneous disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes, but worsened by climate change, food shortages, and so on.

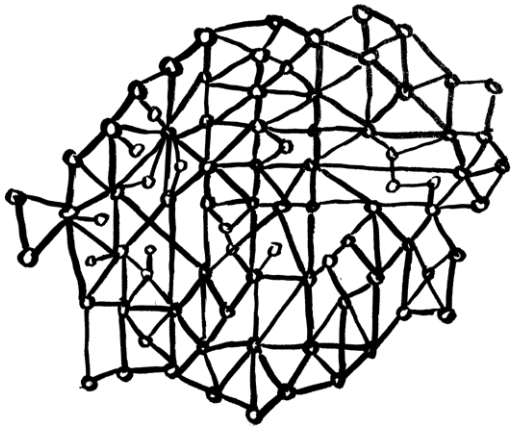
In this scenario, each negative aspect of the collapse of civilization has a reciprocal trend that the resistance movement encourages. The collapse of global industrial capit-

alism has as a counter-trend of local systems of exchange, cooperation, and mutual aid. Generally speaking, in this alternate future, a small number of underground people bring down the big bad structures, and a large number of aboveground people cultivate the little good structures.

Many historical societies collapsed when people returned to villages and less-complex traditional life. They chose to do this. Modern people won't do that, at least not on a large scale, in part because the villages are gone, and traditional ways of life are no longer directly accessible to them. This means that people in modern civilization are in a bind, and many will continue to struggle for industrial civilization even when continuing it is obviously counterproductive. Under a Decisive Ecological Warfare scenario, aboveground activists facilitate this aspect of collapse by developing alternatives that will ease the pressure and encourage people to leave industrial capitalism by choice.

In this alternate future scenario, Decisive Ecological Warfare has four phases that progress from the near future through the fall of industrial civilization. The first phase is **Networking & Mobilization.** The second phase is **Sabotage & Asymmetric Action.** The third phase is **Systems Disruption.** And the fourth and final phase is **Decisive Dismantling of Infrastructure**.

Each phase has its own objectives, operational approaches, and organizational requirements. There's no distinct dividing line between the phases, and different regions progress through the phases at different times.



PHASE I: NETWORKING & MOBILIZATION

Preamble: In phase one, resisters focus on organizing themselves into networks and building cultures of resistance to sustain those networks. Key in this phase is actually forming the above- and underground organizations (or at least nuclei) that will carry out organizational recruitment and decisive action.

Training of activists is key in this phase, especially through low risk (but effective) actions. New recruits will become the combatants, cadres, and leaders of later phases. This is a time when the resistance movement gets organized and gets serious. People are putting their individual needs and conflicts aside in order to form a movement that can fight to win.

This phase is already underway, but a great deal of work remains to be done.

Objectives:

- To build a culture of resistance, with all that en tails

- To build aboveground and underground resistance networks, and to ensure the survival of those networks.

Operations:

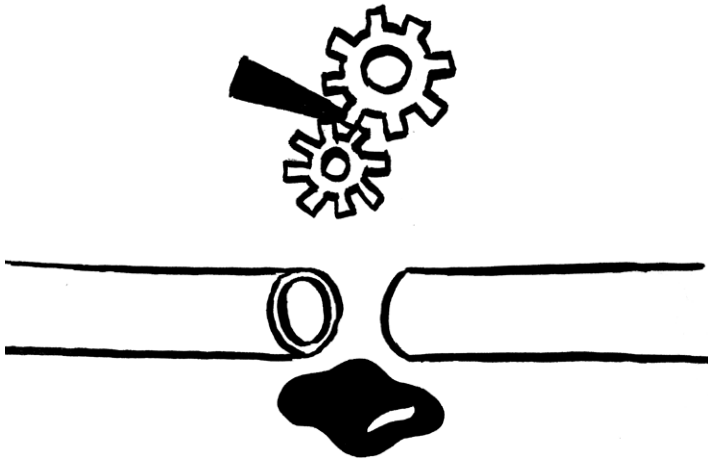
- Operations are generally lower risk actions, so that people can be trained and screened, and support networks put in place. These will fall primarily into the sustaining and shaping categories.

- Maximal recruitment and training is very impor tant at this point. The earlier people are recruited, the more likely they are to be trustworthy and the longer time is available to screen them for their competency for more serious action.

- Communications and propaganda operations are also required for outreach and to spread information about useful tactics and strategies, and on the necessity for organized action.

Organization:

- Most resistance organizations in this scenario are still diffuse networks, but they begin to extend and coalesce. This phase aims to build organization.



PHASE II: SABOTAGE & ASYMMETRIC ACTION

Preamble: In this phase, the resisters might attempt to disrupt or disable particular targets on an opportunistic basis. For the most part, the required underground networks and skills do not yet exist to take on multiple larger targets. In this possible future, underground cells do not attempt to provoke overwhelming repression beyond the ability of their nascent networks to cope. Indeed, major setbacks probably do happen at this phase, indicating a lack of basic rules and structure and signaling the need to fall back on some of the priorities of the first phase.

The resistance movement in this scenario understands the importance of decisive action. They understand that there is no benefit to foolish and hasty action, or from creating problems for which they are not yet prepared. That only leads to a morale whiplash and disappointment. So their movement acts as seriously and swiftly and decisively as it can, but makes sure that it lays the foundation it needs to be truly effective.

The more people join that movement, the harder they work, and the more driven they are, the faster they can progress from one phase to the next.

In this alternate future, aboveground activists push for acceptance and normalization of more militant and radical tactics where appropriate. They vocally support sabotage when it occurs. More moderate advocacy groups use the occurrence of sabotage to criticize those in power for failing to take action on critical issues like climate change. They do not side with those in power against the saboteurs, but argue that the situation is serious enough to make such action legitimate.

At this point in the scenario, more radical and grassroots groups continue to establish a community of resistance, but also establish discrete organizations and parallel institutions, which focus on emergency, disaster preparedness, and helping people cope with impending collapse.

Simultaneously, aboveground activists organize people for civil disobedience, mass confrontation, and other forms of direct action where appropriate.

Something else begins to happen: aboveground organizations establish coalitions, confederations, and regional networks, knowing that there will be greater obstacles to these later on. These confederations maximize the potential of aboveground organizing by sharing materials, knowledge, skills, learning curricula, and so on. They also plan strategically themselves, engaging in persistent planned campaigns instead of reactive or crisis-to-crisis organizing.

Objectives:

- Identify and engage high-priority individual targets.

- Give training and real-world experience to cadres necessary to take on bigger targets and systems. Even decisive actions are limited in scope and impact at this phase, although good target selection and timing allows for significant gains.

- These operations also expose weak points in the system, demonstrate the feasibility of material resistance, and inspire other resisters.

- Publicly establish the rationale for material resistance and confrontation with power.

- Establish concrete aboveground organizations and parallel institutions.

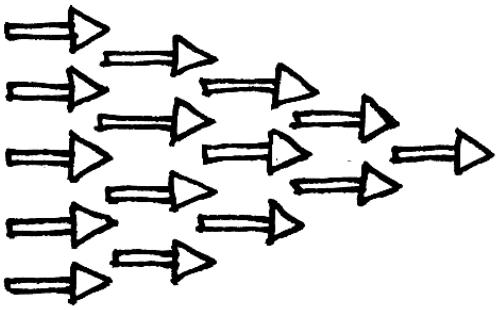
Operations:

- Limited but increasing decisive operations, com bined with growing sustaining operations (to support larger and more logistically demanding organizations) and continued shaping operations.

- In decisive and supporting operations, these hy pothetical resisters are cautious and smart. They know that in this stage they are still building toward the bigger actions that are yet to come.

Organization:

- Requires underground cells, but benefits from larger underground networks. There is still an emphasis on recruitment at this point. Aboveground networks and movements are proliferating as much as they can, especially since the work to come requires significant lead time for developing skills, communities, and so on.



PHASE III: SYSTEMS DISRUPTION

Preamble: In this phase resisters step up from individual targets to address entire industrial, political, and economic systems. Industrial systems disruption requires underground networks organized in a hierarchal or paramilitary fashion. These larger networks emerge out of the previous phases with the ability to carry out multiple simultaneous actions.

Systems disruption is aimed at identifying key points and bottlenecks in the adversary's systems (electrical, transport, financial, and so on) and engaging them to collapse those systems or reduce their functionality. This is not a one-shot deal. Repairs are attempted. Effective systems disruption requires planning for continued and coordinated actions over time.

In this scenario, the aboveground doesn't truly gain traction as long as there is business-as-usual. On the other hand, as capitalist-induced economic collapse, global climate disasters, and peak oil disrupt global industrial and economic systems, support for resilient local communities increases. These disruptions also make it easier for people to cope with full collapse in the long term—short-term loss, long term gain, even where humans are concerned.

Aboveground organizations and institutions are well-established by this phase of this alternate scenario. They continue to push for reforms, focusing on the urgent need for justice, relocalization, and resilient communities, given that the dominant system is unfair, unreliable, and unstable.

Of course, in this scenario the militant actions that impact daily life provoke a backlash. The aboveground activists are the frontline fighters who can mobilize the popular groundswell needed to prevent fascism.

Furthermore, aboveground activists use the disrupted systems as an opportunity to strengthen local communities and parallel institutions. When economic turmoil causes unemployment and hyperinflation, people are employed locally for the benefit of their community and the land. In this scenario, as national governments increasingly struggle with crises and fail to provide for people, local and directly democratic councils begin to take over administration of basic and emergency services, and people redirect their taxes to those local entities (perhaps as part of a campaign of general noncooperation against those in power).

Throughout this phase, strategic efforts are made to augment existing stresses on economic and industrial systems caused by peak oil, financial instability, and related factors. The resisters think of themselves as pushing on a rickety building that's already starting to lean. Indeed, in this scenario many systems disruptions come from within the system itself, rather than from resisters.

This phase accomplishes significant and decisive gains. Even if the main industrial and economic systems have not completely collapsed, prolonged disruption means a reduction in ecological impact; great news for future survival. Even a 50 per cent decrease in industrial consumption or greenhouse gas emissions is a massive victory that buys resisters some time.

In this version of the future, resistance groups truly begin to take the initiative. For perhaps the first time in history, those in power are globally off balance and occupied by worsening crisis after crisis. They can no longer force resistance groups or colonized people to stay on the defensive, to respond to attacks, to be constantly kept off balance. This provides a key opportunity for resistance groups, and autonomous cultures and communities, to seize and retain the initiative.

Objectives:

- Target key points of specific industrial and economic systems to disrupt and disable them.

- Effect a measurable decrease in industrial activity and industrial consumption.

- Enable concessions, negotiations, or social changes if applicable.

- Induce the collapse of particular companies, industries, or economic systems.

Operations:

- Mostly decisive and sustaining, but shaping where necessary for systems disruption. Cadres and combatants should be increasingly seasoned at this point, but the onset of decisive and serious action will mean a high attrition rate for resisters. In this alternate future, those who are committed to militant resistance go in expecting that they will either end up dead or in jail. They know that anything better than that was a gift to be won through skill and luck.

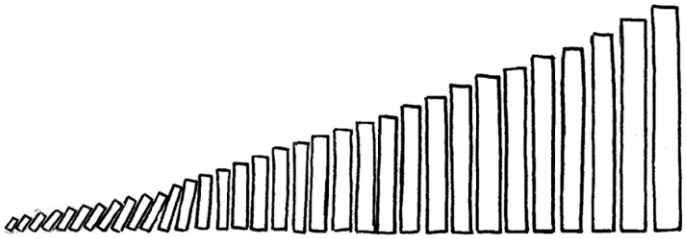
Organization:

- Heavy use of underground networks required; operational coordination is a prerequisite for effective systems disruption.

- Recruitment is ongoing at this point; especially to recruit auxiliaries and to cope with losses to attrition. However, during this phase there are multiple serious attempts at infiltration.

- Aboveground organizations are able to mobilize extensively because of various social, political, and material crises.

- At this point, militant resisters become concerned about backlash from people who should be on their side, such as many liberals, especially as those in power put pressure on aboveground activists.



PHASE IV: DECISIVE DISMANTLING OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Preamble: Decisive dismantling of infrastructure goes a step beyond systems disruption. The intent is to permanently dismantle as much of the fossil fuel-based industrial infrastructure as possible. This phase is the last resort; in the most optimistic projection, it would not be necessary.

The key issue—which we've come back to again and again—is time. We will soon reach, (if we haven't already reached) the trigger point of irreversible runaway global warming. Disruptions in this scenario are engineered in a way that shifts the impact toward industry and attempts to minimize impacts on civilians. If selective disruption doesn't work soon enough, some resisters may conclude that all-out disruption is required to stop the planet from burning to cinder.

Phase III gives time for the resistance to develop itself logistically and organizationally. To proceed from phase III to phase IV, resisters in this scenario need the organizational capacity to take on the scope of action required under phase IV, and the certainty that there is no longer any point in waiting for societal reforms to succeed on their own timetable.

It's important to not misinterpret the point of Phase IV of this alternate future scenario. The point is not to cause human casualties. The point is to stop the destruction of the planet. Ecological destruction on this planet is primarily caused by industry and capitalism; the issue of population is tertiary at best. The point is to reduce the damage as quickly as possible.

This is not an easy phase for the above-grounders. Part of their job in this scenario is also to help demolish infrastructure, but they are mostly demolishing exploitative political and economic infrastructure, not physical infrastructure. Efforts are undertaken to deal with emergencies and cope with the nastier parts of collapse.

Objectives:

- Dismantle the critical physical infrastructure required for industrial civilization to function.

- Induce widespread industrial collapse, beyond any economic or political systems.

- Use continuing and coordinated actions to hamper repairs and replacement.

Operations:

- Focus almost exclusively on decisive and sustaining operations.

Organization:

- Requires well-developed militant underground networks.

In this scenario resisters fall back on previous phases after setbacks, to regroup and prepare for more serious action. Even this scenario will require some people to stay at phase I indefinitely, passing on the basic knowledge and skills necessary to fight back for centuries and millennia.

The hypothetical actionists who put this strategy into place are able to intelligently move from one phase to the next: identifying when the correct elements are in place, when resistance networks are sufficiently mobilized and trained, and when external pressures dictate change.

This is particularly difficult to do when resistance does not have a central command. Resistance to civilization is inherently decentralized. That goes double for underground groups which have minimal contact with others. To compensate for the lack of command structure, a general grand strategy in this scenario became widely known and accepted. Furthermore, loosely-allied groups were ready to take action whenever the strategic situation calls for it. These groups were prepared to take advantage of crises like economic collapses.

Individual cells rarely had the numbers or logistics to engage in multiple simultaneous actions at different locations. That job fell to the paramilitary groups, with cells in multiple locations, who had the command structure and the discipline to properly carry out network disruption. Once a larger simultaneous action happened (causing, say, a blackout), autonomous cells took advantage of the opportunity to undertake their own actions, within a few hours. In this way unrelated cells engaged in something close to simultaneous attacks, maximizing their effectiveness. Of course, if decentralized groups frequently stage attacks in the wake of larger "trigger actions," the corporate media may stop broadcasting news of attacks to avoid triggering more.

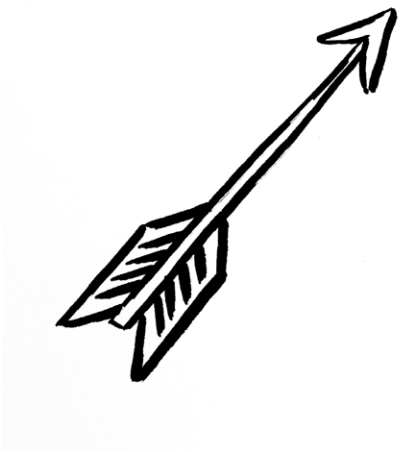
Many military strategists have warned against piecemeal or half-measures when only total war will do the job. In his book Grand Strategy: Principles and Practices, John M. Collins argues that timid attacks may strengthen the resolve of the enemy, because they constitute a provocation but don't significantly damage the physical capability or morale of the occupier. Other strategists have prioritized the material destruction over the adversary's "will to fight." Robert Anthony Pape discusses the issue in Bombing to Win, in which he analyzes the effectiveness of strategic bombing in various wars. Specifically, Pape argues that targeting an entire economy may be more effective than simply going after individual factories or facilities.

When capitalist economies hit hard times, as they did in the Great Depression, or as they did in Argentina a decade ago, or as they have in many places in many times, people fall back on necessities, and often on barter syst-

ems and webs of mutual aid. They fall back on community and household economies, economies of necessity that are far more resilient than industrial capitalism, and even more robust than war economies. Pape's analysis is insightful, but it's important to understand the differences between his premises and goals and the premises and goals of Decisive Ecological Warfare.

Another argument resisters in this scenario made for actions against the economy as a whole, rather than engaging in piecemeal or tentative actions, is the element of surprise. They recognized that sporadic sabotage would sacrifice the element of surprise and allow their enemy to regroup and develop ways of coping with future actions.

Hypothetical historians looking back might note another potential shortcoming of DEW: that it required perhaps too many people involved in risky tactics, and that resistance organizations would lack the numbers and logistical persistence required for prolonged struggle. That was a valid concern, and was dealt with proactively by developing effective support networks early on. Of course, other suggested strategies—such as a mass movement of any kind—required far more people and far larger support networks engaging resistance. Many underground networks operated on a small budget, and although they required more specialized equipment, they generally required far fewer resources than mass movements.



Chapter 15

Our Best Hope

A radical movement grows from a culture of resistance. Without the actual resistance, no community will win justice against an oppressive system.

Our best hope will never lie in survivalism, or preparing for the worst. Our best and only hope is a resistance movement that is willing to face the scale of the horrors, gather our forces, and fight like hell for all we hold dear. These, then, are the principles of a Deep Green Resistance movement.

1.
Deep Green Resistance recognizes that this culture is insane.

Power is sociopathic and hence there will not be a voluntary transformation to a sustainable way of life. Providing "examples" of sustainability are not a broad solution to a culture addicted to power and domination.

Since this culture went viral out of the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley, it has encountered untold numbers of sustainable societies, and wiped them out with a sadism that is incomprehensible.

Civilization requires empire, colonies to dominate and gut. Domination requires hierarchy, objectification, and violence. The result is torture, rape, and genocide. And the deep heart of this hell is the authoritarian personality structured around masculinity with its entitlement and violation imperative.

2.
Deep Green Resistance embraces the necessity of political struggle.

Oppression is not a mistake, and changing individual hearts and minds is not a viable strategy. By political struggle, I mean specifically institutional change, whether by reform or replacement or both. It's institutions that shape those hearts and minds.

Fighting injustice is never easy. History tells us that the weight of power will come down on any potential resistance. The fact that there will be retaliation is no reason to give up before we begin. It is a reality to be recognized so that we can prepare for it.

The necessity of political struggle means confronting and contradicting those on the left who say that resistance is futile. Defend the possibility of resistance, insist on a moral imperative of fighting for this planet, and argue for direct action against perpetrators.

There are a few corporations that have turned the planet into dead commodities for their private wealth, destroying human cultures along with it. Their infrastructures—political, economic, physical—are immensely vulnerable. Perhaps the gold standard of resistance against industrial civilization is MEND, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta. They conduct direct attacks against workers, bridges, office sites, storage facilities, rigs and pipelines, and support vessels. They have reduced Nigeria's oil output by a dramatic one third. They have university educations, have studied other militant movements, and are trained in combat. They've also won "broad sympathy among the Niger Delta community." This sympathy has helped them maintain security and safety for their combatants, as the local population has not turned them in. These are not armed thugs, but a true resistance. And they number just a few hundred.

I can guarantee that 98 percent of people reading this book have more resources individually than all of MEND put together when they started. Resistance is not just theoretically possible. It is happening now. The only question is, will we join them?

3.
Deep Green Resistance must be multilevel.

There is work to be done—desperately important work—aboveground and underground, in the legal sphere and the economic realm, locally and internationally. We must not be divided by a diversionary split between radicalism and reformism. People of conscience can disagree. They can also respectfully choose to work in different arenas requiring different tactics. We have to build a successful movement despite differences.

Every institution across this culture must be reworked or replaced by people whose loyalty to the planet and to justice is absolute. A DGR movement understands the necessity of both aboveground and underground work, of confronting unjust institutions as well as building alternative institutions, of every effort to transform the economic, political, and social spheres of this culture. Whatever you are called to do, it needs to be done.

A vast amount of pressure is needed to stop fossil fuel and other industrial extractions. Legislative initiatives, boycotts, direct action, and civil disobedience must be priorities. If these fail, a Deep Green Resistance is willing to take the next step to stop the perpetrators.

In the UK, someone is feeling the urgency. On April 12, 2010, the machinery at Mainshill coal site was sabotaged. According to their communiqué, "Sabotage against the coal industry will continue until its expansion is halted."

This is a simple vow, an "I do" to every living creature. Deep Green Resistance remembers that love is a verb, a verb that must call us to action.

4.
Deep Green Resistance requires repair of the planet.

This principle has the built-in prerequisite, of course, of stopping the destruction, which requires an honest look at the culture that a true solar economy can support. To actively repair the planet requires understanding the damage. The necessary repair—the return of forests, prairies, and wetlands—could happen over a reasonable fifty to one hundred years if we were to voluntarily reduce our numbers.

How many people could any given local foodshed actually support, and support sustainably, indefinitely? That number needs to be taken up as the baseline of the replacement culture. Our new story has to end, "And they lived happily ever after at 20,000 humans from here to the foothills."

This is a job for the Transitioners and the permaculture wing, and so far, they're getting it wrong. Soil is not just dirt. Soil is alive. It is kept alive by perennial polycultures—forests and prairies. The permanent cover protects it from sun, rain, and wind; the constant application of dead grass and leaves adds carbon and nutrients; and the root systems are crucial for soil's survival, providing habitat for the microfauna that make land life possible.

Perennials, both trees and grasses, are deeply rooted. Annuals are not. Those deep roots reach into the rock that forms the substrate of our planet and pull up minerals, minerals which are necessary for the entire web of life. Without that action, the living world would eventu-

ally run out of minerals. Annuals, on the other hand, literally mine the soil, pulling out minerals with no ability to replace them. Every load of vegetables off the farm or out of the garden is a transfer of minerals that must be replaced. The addition of animal products—manure, blood meal, bone meal—is essential for nitrogen and mineral replacement, and they are glaringly absent in most calculations I've seen for food self-sufficiency.

Annual crops use up the organic matter in the soil, where perennials build it. One article in Science showed that all tillage systems are contributors to global warming, with wheat and soy as the worst. This is why historically agriculture marks the beginning of global warming. In contrast, because perennials build organic matter, they sequester both carbon and methane, at about 1,000 pounds per acre. And, of course, living forests and prairies will not stay alive without their animal cohorts, without the full complement of their community.

Agriculture is the process that undergirds civilization. That is the destruction that must be repaired. Acre by acre, the living communities of forests, grasslands, and wetlands must be allowed to come home. We must love them enough to miss them and miss them enough to restore them.

The best hope for our planet lies in their restoration. Peter Bane's calculations show that restoring grasslands east of the Dakotas would instantaneously render the United States a carbon-sequestering nation. That repair should be the main goal of the environmental movement. We have the technology for prairie and forest restoration, and we know how to use it. And the grasses will be happy to do most of the work for us.

Restoring agricultural land to grasslands with appropriate ruminants has multiple benefits beyond carbon sequestration. It spells the end of feedlot and factory farming. It's healthier for humans. It would eliminate essentially all fertilizer and pesticides, which would eliminate the dead zones at the mouths of rivers around globe. The one in the Gulf of Mexico, for instance, is the size of New Jersey. It would stop the catastrophic flooding that results from annual monocrops, flooding being the obvious outcome of destroying wetlands.

It also scales up instantly. Farmers can turn a profit the first year of grass-based farming. This is in dramatic contrast to growing corn, soy, and wheat, in which they can never make a profit. Right now six corporations, including Monsanto and Cargill, control the world food supply. Because of their monopoly, they can drive prices down below the cost of production. The only reason farmers stay in business is because the federal government—that would be the US taxpayers—make up the difference, which comes to billions of dollars a year. The farmers are essentially serfs to the grain cartels, and dependent on handouts from the federal government. But grass-fed beef and bison can liberate them in one year. We don't even need government policy to get started on the most basic repair of our planet. We just need to create the demand and set up the infrastructure one town, one region at a time.

Repairing those grasslands will also profoundly restore wildlife habitat to the animals that need a home. Right now, 83 percent of the terrestrial biosphere is under direct human influence, and 36 percent of the earth's bioproductive surface is completely dominated by humans. By any measure, that is vastly more than our share. It is our responsibility not just to stop it, but to fix it. Civilizations are, in the end, cultures of human entitlement, and they've taken all there is to take.

5.
Deep Green Resistance means repair of human cultures.

That repair must, in the words of Andrea Dworkin, be based on "one absolute standard of human dignity." That starts with a fierce loyalty to everyone's physical boundaries and sexual integrity. It continues with food, shelter, and health care, and the firm knowledge that our basic needs are secure. And it opens out into a democracy where all people get an equal say in the economic and political decisions that affect them.

For most of our time on the planet, we had that. There exists an abundance of ideas on how to transform our communities away from domination and towards justice and human rights. The only thing missing is the decision to see these plans through.

We also need that new story that so many of the Transitioners prioritize. It's important to recognize first that not everyone has lost their original story. There are indigenous peoples still holding on to theirs. Such stories need to be told, but more, they need to be instituted. All the stories in the world will do no good if they end with the telling.

One institution that deserves serious consideration is a true people's militia. Right now in the United States only the right wing is organizing itself into an armed force. We should be putting weapons in the hands of people who believe in human rights and who are sworn to protect them, not in those of people who feel threatened because we have a black president.

Contemporaneous with a people's militia would be training in both the theory and practice of mass civil disobedience to reject illegitimate government or a coup if that comes to pass. Gene Sharp's Civilian-Based Defense explains how this technique works with successful examples from history. His book is a curriculum that should be added to Transition Towns and other descent preparation initiatives.

If the people with the worst values are the ones with the guns and the training, we may be very sorry. Personal faith in the innate goodness of human beings is not enough of a deterrent or shield for me.

A true people's militia would be sworn to uphold human rights, including women's rights. The following would go a long way toward helping create a true people's militia: female officers; training curriculum that includes feminism, rape awareness, and abuse dynamics; zero tolerance for misogynist slurs, sexual harassment, and assault; clear policies for reporting infringements and clear consequences; background checks to exclude batterers and sex offenders; and severe consequences for any abuse of civilians.

A people's militia could garner widespread support by following a model of community engagement, much as the Black Panthers grew through their free breakfast program. Besides basic activities like weapons training and military maneuvers, the militia could help the surrounding community with services like delivering firewood to the elderly or fixing the school roof. The idea of a militia will make some people uneasy, and respectful personal and community relationships would help overcome their reticence.

6.
Deep Green Resistance recognizes the necessity of militant action.

If we had enough people for a mass movement or enough time to build one, we could shut down the activities that are destroying our planet using only determined human bodies. Enough people could shut down the oil refineries, the coal plants, the relentless horror of the tar sands and strip mines and clearcuts. In the fall of 2010, French workers went on strike to protest a proposed raise in the retirement age. Protestors used trucks, burning tires, and human chains to blockade fuel depots and close all twelve of France's oil refineries.

The major oil terminal was offline for three weeks, stranding thirty oil tankers. When the government tried to open the country's emergency reserves, protestors blockaded twenty more terminals. In a few weeks, the whole economy was slowing toward a halt for lack of fuel. As Jean-Louis Schilansky, president of the French Oil Association said, "We have considerable bottlenecks."

The French strikers did what every military and every insurgency does: interrupted key nodes of infrastructure. They were well on their way to completely shutting down the economy, and they did it using nonviolence. I would vastly prefer to wage our struggle nonviolently. As the French strike has shown, it could be done. If we had enough people, we could shut this party down by midnight using human blockades. But my longing will not produce the necessary numbers. And it's a little late in the day for millenarianism.

This is the question on which the world entire may depend: are you willing to accept the only strategy left to us? Are you willing to set aside your last, fierce dream of that brave uprising of millions strong? The existence of those brave millions is the empty hope of the desperate, and they're not coming to our rescue.

But a few hundred exist, answering to the name of MEND. They are willing to say to the oil industry,

"Leave our land or you will die in it."

Are we willing to do the same? To say: leave our mountains, our wetlands, our last, ancient trees? Leave our kin of feathers and fur, who every second are slipping away from the world and into memory? Are we willing to fight for this planet?

The noose is tightening, and there is only time for one last breath. Will you close your eyes and let the earth fall, with a sickening snap of species and forests and rivers? Or will you fight?

Whatever you love, it is under assault. Love is a verb. So take that final breath and fight.

A Story

All of this will come to nothing without direct action against infrastructure, without an actual resistance. And so, a story. This is a story of a future, a future as fragile as the first line of dawn.

Our story begins on a day like today. Somewhere, the question happens: will you join me?

The question is asked again, and then again, six times, ten times. The first meeting is held, tactics discussed, tasks disbursed. Someone's job is to keep asking that one question, to find others, to multiply outward until there are enough.

Enough doesn't mean just numbers. Enough means trained bodies, disciplined habits, dependable behavior, and an unshakeable moral core. Enough means courage, an acceptance of the sacrifices that may well lie ahead, and thoroughly understanding the strategy we are proposing.

The revolution is not nigh, general chaos is not going to bring it on, and symbolic attacks on people or property are of no strategic use. DGR is not a desperate call to act on whatever targets are at hand. We aim to be effective. A DGR strategy does not include pitched battles. Our goal is not to bring down the US government, or any government. DGR is a fight against a singular enemy: industrial civilization.

But because the enemy is not a military, we are left with wrenching ethical decisions. We can say that civilization is a war against the living world, but that does not answer the moral dilemma of putting living beings at risk. I have no answer, only an emergency the size of land, sea, and sky. I never asked to be in this position. All I can do is beg the people who might read this book: please do everything you can to spare all sentient life.

To those of you shaking your heads in horror: do you have enough bodies to shut down a third of the oil industry and drive BP from this land? How about the whole industry and mountain top removal along with it?

And I know that loosening our basic moral precepts also has consequences, especially when mixed with youth, fanaticism, and masculinity. I know all the ways this can go wrong, how easily extremism unmoors its own moral compass. And I also know that my planet is dying, with the most vulnerable always first in line. No one who does not feel the burden of the moral risks of serious actions should be making these decisions. Never forget the goal, the strategy, and the real target.

Our actionists are not trying to change consciousness. They're not trying to get press. They're not after a new government or a seat at a political table. They are trying to stop the burning of fossil fuel and industrial-scale destructions of the life-support systems of our planet.

The infrastructure of industrial civilization is both vulnerable and accessible, but the environmental movement is not used to thinking in terms of infrastructure. This is the language of war, not petitions. It is long past time for this war to have two sides.

The underground cells that form are unlikely to connect into a single network, given the realities of surveillance technologies and the atomized nature of modern life. But a few networks the size of MEND could easily be built. The unconnected networks will not be able to coordinate but they can still act in concert and multiply each other's efforts.

The infrastructure of fossil fuel would be their highest priority, and the nodes with the densest criticality are their best targets. Those targets have two factors that have got to be weighed. The first is access: can it be reached? The second is moral: should it be done?

Ten minutes on the Internet will tell anyone where the oil comes from, where the tankers dock, where the refineries blister in clumps along the coasts. All of this information is easy, and public, and obvious.

A year after Hurricane Katrina, 12 percent of the oil and 9.5 percent of the natural gas production had stopped for good. The facilities haven't been rebuilt because

the reserves left aren't worth the costs of construction. Actions against infrastructure will get less desultory every year.

A few more minutes of research will yield maps, gas and oil pipelines, the rail lines that carry coal. A few more, the addresses of corporate headquarters. Another search reveals a tiny handful of factories that make the monstrous equipment for mountaintop removal. Thinking like a resistance, you and twenty friends could stop mountaintop removal.

Will they build it back? A lot of it. And the resistance will bring it down again because that's what resistance movements do. Will someone get caught? Probably, but there are others ready to take their place. Will there be consequences and fallout that no one foresaw? Yes. DEW requires cadres, not just combatants, people who will research, study, and think. But in the end, all the planning in the world will not save DGR actionists from the moral grief and adult sorrow that our responsibilities hold.

Targeting the Internet would take more specialized skill, so its accessibility is limited, but it's a target that involves no risks to sentient beings. To be clear: the Internet does not exist so people can tag each other on Facebook. It was originally created for the military, and was quickly adopted by corporations. It's what makes the vast and instant transfer of capital possible; without it, there would be no globalization. And the electric grid is 300,000 critical kilometers of accessibility. Even intermittent disruption could bring industrialization to a near halt.

And every day of that halt is that much less carbon in the sky, that much more breathing room for bison and black terns, that much more of a chance for the poor the world over whose lives and lands are being gutted by weapons made of power and wealth. Poor people are not hungry for lack of American imports. They're being driven off their land and into starvation by the dumping of cheap agricultural commodities. Six corporations essentially control the world food supply, and they've wrecked self-sufficient subsistence economies the world over. The sooner the imports of the grain cartels are stopped, the more likely it will be that the impoverished can reclaim their land and their lifeways. The authors of this book have been accused of suggesting genocide: meanwhile, the genocide is happening now. Anything that stops the rich can only ease the burdens on the poor, including the burden of starvation.

And every disruption in daily life in the rich countries helps break through the denial that this way of life is stable and permanent. Remember, the end is inevitable: anything that encourages people to start preparing will ease our collective way into energy descent with less suffering. Nothing that our actionists do is going to bring industrial civilization crashing down in twenty-four hours. DEW will not result in sudden mass

starvation, here or abroad. It will result in disruptions, and if it works, those disruptions will become more or less permanent over a few years' time.

The disruptions of DEW will give the global rich an opportunity to start rebuilding the resilient communities that are the core project of the Transition movement. The need for those local economies and local democracies is urgent from the impending reality of peak oil and catastrophic climate change. The faster we can make the industrially-cushioned feel that urgency, the more time they will have to prepare. It takes time to learn to grow food, to accumulate skills, and build the required infrastructure.

And never forget there are other people being hurt right now, people who have no choice about oil or coal or iPods, starting with a brown pelican and a loggerhead turtle. They have a right to not be choking on sludge, and they have a right to a future for their children as well. They have no choice about denial or preparation, and no possible transition to a way of life on a planet too many degrees hotter than anything their ancestors knew.

In our story, the first direct hit to industrial infrastructure is likely to be something pragmatic, like the electric grid. Our actionists have planned well. The underground networks can hit a few nodes at once, and the unconnected affinity groups can follow up on the vulnerable targets to which they have access. The first DGR blackout could last days or even weeks.

An instructive event to consider from recent history is the Northeast Blackout of 2003. On August 14, a huge power surge caused a rolling blackout over a large section of the northeastern US and Canada, affecting 55 million people. A total of 256 electric power plants shut down, and electricity generation dropped by 80 percent.

But the phrase "cascading failure" applies to a lot more than the grid. Oil refineries couldn't operate and neither could the nine nuclear power plants in the region. Gas stations couldn't pump gas. Air, rail, and even car traffic halted. The financial centers of Chicago and Manhattan were immobilized, and Wall Street was completely shut down. The Internet only worked for dial-up users, and then only as long as their batteries lasted. Most industries had to stop, and many weren't running again until August 22. The major television and cable networks had disruptions in their broadcasts. In New York City, both restaurants and neighbors cooked up everything on hand and gave it away for free as the perishables were just going to have to be thrown out. Meanwhile, the Indigo Girls concert went on as planned in Central Park. And the New Jersey Turnpike stopped collecting tolls.

I don't know about you, but I'm not seeing any drawbacks here. The cascade was broad and deep, if short. Fossil fuel use was seriously decreased; nuclear power plants rendered useless; the rich were kept from draining the poor; and the flood of lies and vicious media images stopped drowning our hearts, our children, and our culture for a brief night. And there were parties with neighbors and music on top of that.

The DEW activists will be soundly condemned, and not just by the mainstream, but by Big Eco, and by many grassroots activists. This is to be expected. Our actionists need to prepare for it emotionally, socially, organizationally. It can't be helped. Remember the goal: to disrupt and dismantle industrial civilization. Judged by that goal, our actionists' first attack on the electric grid has been a raging success.

And nothing breeds success like success. More groups form, more cells divide in the network. Maybe a whole arm is dedicated to the grid while others go on to other targets, like the tar sands. Our story is accelerating. A victory for the Tar Sands Brigade comes on the night the draglines are torched, and a few of the factories that make them are incinerated.

Again, Big Oil, Big Coal, and Big Eco all condemn the activists. The public overwhelmingly hates them. But in the Athabasca River, the northern pike and the tundra swans love them. Native Athabasca Chipewyan and Mikisew Cree elders and more than a few Clan Mothers are smiling all week. When the next DGR blackout rolls through the middle of the continent, a sudden blast blazes across the night as a key bridge comes down on Provincial Route 63. Try getting that million-pound equipment across the river now.

Only a few hundred people are involved at this point. There are three networks, and several affinity groups, and some of the First Nations' warrior societies are now involved.

And in this story, there are people who want to join, but can't. They make the decisions they have to make, and do what they can instead. They translate this book into Hindi and Spanish and Mandarin and Sámi. The question is asked and asked and asked, whispered like a prayer in that moment the heart shifts from petition to thanksgiving: will you join me? Until "me" becomes "us," because finally a resistance has quickened.

The resistance never loses sight of the targets, though it may lose combatants over it. Better to have a reliable few then an unstable more, especially when potentially dangerous activities are involved. The targets hold steady: fossil fuel, industrial logging, industrial fishing, industrial agriculture, and industrial capitalism.

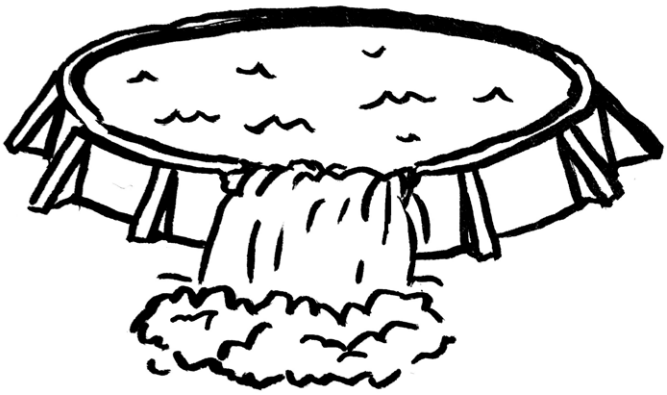
Industrial logging is ripping the lungs from the earth, and the people from their homes. The Amazon rain forest once sheltered 10 million indigenous, reduced now to under 200,000. If you want to talk about genocide, there is a trail of tears still wet with blood leading to the actual perpetrators: Mitsubishi, Georgia-Pacific, Unocal (now Chevron). Unocal, for instance, was sued by Burmese villagers for complicity in rape, torture, forced labor, and murder, abuses inflicted on them when Unocal put in its pipeline. They were also forcibly relocated, the happily ever after of this story every single time it is told.

DGR requires a trail of solidarity, a trail that is build up into a protective barrier, an unbreachable line of de termination against industrial assault. Our actionists draw that line around every rainforest and every last stand of old growth, and they build that barrier with transfers of funds and training and materiel. They also build it

with risks and courage, as corporate infrastructure is within reach of people in the United States and Canada, especially the white, native-English speakers who can dress the part.

Industrial logging requires a chain of command, a flow of capital, specialized equipment, transportation routes, and end points in manufacturing centers. Every item in that list reads like a command to a general officer. Our actionists, steeped in strategy, understand what needs to be done, and some of the elves come out of the trees to join them, picking up the weapons of this war.

Industrial fishing is made possible by gigantic trawlers three stories high, with steel rollers on the bottom. The rollers crush everything, starting with the oceans' forests, coral. Coral reefs are the oldest living communities on earth, some of them over 50 million years old. Read that again: 50 million years. They are home to a full quarter of ocean life. Industrial fishing is the murder of the oceans along with the people who once subsisted on them. That murder is an emergency that displaces metaphors. And that murder has infrastructure, just like logging and oil and coal. It has a small handful of command centers, a few weapons manufacturers, some perpetrators, and some supply lines. Remember this: there used to be whales in the Mediterranean. Will our children learn that there used to be fish in the ocean? Remember this as well: two out of three animal breaths are made possible by plankton, by the oxygen they produce. We owe everything to those tiny creatures, creatures whose home of water is acidifying with every hour that industrialization burns on. If the oceans go down, we go down with them.



Industrial agriculture may present fewer targets, but those targets are crucial to fish and forests and the last scraps of prairie. They're also crucial for food security and cultural survival in the majority world. Fish are at risk because agriculture requires water, especially those Green Revolution crops, and that water is either pumped from aquifers or drained from dammed rivers. A dammed river is a dead river, and what dies first are the fish. Next to die are the trees that need the nutrients the fish bring. Trees also need the ground water that has now sunk a mile below the surface, drained out for cotton and rice. An engineered river is the exact opposite of a wetland, which were once the most species-dense habitats on the planet. Without the wetlands, the birds are gone. Rivers are essentially the blood of the world, pumped by a heart of seasonal floods and spring thaws,and their veins have been emptied for cheap agricultural commodities that leverage too well into power and wealth.

Many dams score high for industrial criticality. Dam removal is also critical for biotic survival, and the demolition of dams would be a cascading success for birds and fish, for wetlands and forests, for the disappearing deltas and the slim hope of prairies.

In our story, there are houses on those once and future floodplains. Our actionists warn people and warn them well, because DEW has to mean it. These are not symbolic attacks meant for media coverage. These are the last chances for that long, slow pulse of life now bleeding out around the globe.

The end of industrial agriculture could be an opening where the culture of resistance gets serious. Somebody has to start repairing the prairie. That industrial carbon has got to be sequestered, and the bison brought home to help. If environmentalists would only understand that the prairie is desperate to return and do its part, that all it needs is people willing to help it, then acre by acre hope could take root. Repair the broken rivers, the exhausted soil. Restore the grasses and their animal cohorts. Rejoin as participants, never again to dominate. The land itself is cheap. And just like MEND is financially self-sufficient, grass-based farmers can make money the first year. So gather your friends and your deep green vision and go.

All of this shows how absolutely necessary the aboveground and the militants are to each other. DEW alone cannot stop processes of desertification, while all the committed efforts of human rights and democracy activists will not produce the essential changes needed in the time left to our planet.

The coming of energy descent and biotic collapse, in whatever proportions, do not have to mean mass starvation. To be very blunt, it is up to us whether we starve or eat. Will the energy left to society go to more useless crap for the wealthy or will it go to transport basic sustenance while local economies struggle into existence? Are we

willing to tell the wealthy that they can't have a personal mountain of electronic junk, not while we lack for food? And 90¢ of every food dollar in the US goes to processed food. The food supply is structured for corporate profits. So unstructure it. It is our collective fault if we starve, our failure to take back our power.

Fourteen hundred people control the world economy. This one is simple: they have our wealth and we aim to take it back. The destruction of the physical infrastructure of capitalism is only a stopgap so long as law structures organized theft, and that theft is backed by force. But the activism and initiatives to redirect our economies to human needs are not winning, not anywhere on the globe. Those initiatives need help. Targeting the infrastructure of global capitalism involves little threat to human life. There are twenty major stock exchanges. All of them are profoundly dependent on electricity. All of them close at night. Believing that the poor are dependent on the rich is just an updated version of the White Man's Burden. They don't need America's grain, GMOs, technology, or corporations. They definitely don't need the rich to transform their "resource base"—their land, trees, fish, oil, sunlight, or labor—into wealth and then loan it back to them. The more our actionists can disrupt the flow of capital, the more breathing room there is for fragile radicles of justice.

Here is the emotional tension in our story. Our actionists have a very fine balance to walk. The desperate need for serious impact leads to a moral dilemma inherent in uncertain consequences. And there will be so many more dilemmas, some requiring decisions and offering no time except for regrets.

DEW will require sacrifices, some of them harsh and permanent. Our actionists may have to choose this work over love, family, friends. They will have to take recruitment seriously and security breaches even more seriously. They may have to go to prison for half a lifetime rather than turn on their comrades. They may have to risk their lives, and what's often harder, the lives of others. There will be no heroes' welcome, not for the non-indigenous. There will be secrecy and trauma and betrayal, and it will wear them to the bone.

But because this is our best hope, there's also the possibility of victory. The strikes will be decisive, but the victory will be more like the slow search of roots through soil. You will find water when the answer is yes. You will find more water when six yeses meet to draw a map of the possible, a list of the tasks, an arrow aimed at the heart of hell. Strength is only half the pull. Steady your hands as you take aim. It will take a few months to let it loose. But that first arrow will be fletched with the feathers of passenger pigeons and great auks, and every flying thing will wish it home.

In six months, you've scored a few and lost a few, but you're ready for more. More means your success has parlayed into recruitment and a small network is almost in place. In nine months, they're trained. In ten, the need-to-know order ripples through. Two days later, the grid goes dead, the bridge comes down, the equipment sinks or burns up the night. You have bought life on this planet—from the tiny green constancy of plankton to the patient grace of bison—a few more hours, maybe a day.

And the joy you weren't expecting: across the continent or halfway around the world, someone else answers in kind, a "Yes" in the clear language of resistance. People you will never meet darken the sky above Berlin or Bangkok, light up the night in Fort McMurray, kill computers in the Mumbai Stock Exchange. The war is on.

In a year you've crashed the grid twice; the Forest Brigade has taken out equipment and roads, two factories, and a nice chunk of Plum Creek's corporate headquarters. And Fish Defense got the Swan's Falls and Minidoka dams. Twelve are dead, three have been captured. And the response by those in power has been swift, severe, and indiscriminate. Two hundred people have been disappeared by the police or by corporate goons. Some may be actionists, some may be aboveground activists. Some may have nothing to do with resistance at all. Those three who are captured don't talk, and the message comes that they won't. All you can do is mourn in the minutes between sleep and waking. Some day you can break and let tears come. But not now. Now all focus is forward.

It takes a few more months, but one morning the news is everywhere: in the night, three draglines in West Virginia were melted to scrap. "Leave our mountains or you will die in them" is the single communique. You don't know these actionists, but you know the rhythm of their hearts. The Oil Brigade has left for Louisiana, committed to taking down the rigs, a toxic mimic of a forest rising above the sea, a sea that has been slick with oil for twenty years. The dams on the Mississippi are attacked, one by one by one. Then a whole cell is caught

in the Midwest, eight of them rounded up. Paranoia spreads like a plague, the rumors, the purges. Your network holds because you built it to do that. Only the serious were asked, and they were trained. They also had to swear on everything they held sacred to hold to discipline and act with honor.

By the end of the second year, the grid is no longer dependable. The economy is stuttering, and the American public is ready to drink your blood. But somewhere a black tern is feeding her young, and when they fledge, they will carry the hope of their entire species on their small wings. In Burma and the Amazon, a few elders still speak their native languages, dense with words for plants and rain and spirit. In year three, oil hits $200 a barrel, then $210, $220. A little higher and the system will start to crash itself. Carbon is at 400 ppm and still climbing. The network in the east sends successful shiploads of homemade materiel south. The people have more than spears to fight with now. The Belo Monte dam is stopped forever: 20,000 people and the forest get to stay home.

Nonviolent activists are able to completely shut down the G-20 meeting that year. An amendment to the US Constitution to strike corporate personhood is making its way through the states. Las Vegas goes dark and even those who hate you have to smile. And there are widening gaps on the supermarket shelves.

But urban chickens have eased the way for the return of goats and pigs. The Transitioners write a new platform, a third generation Transition manifesto, based on direct democracy, human rights, feminism, steady-state economies. Some run for local office; a few win. In Eugene and

Madison and Pittsburgh, there are monumental efforts on behalf of civic literacy and then participatory democracy. In Berkeley, corporations are declared illegal.

The rewilders, eyes gleaming, pledge to buy up the flood plain of the Mississippi River, acre by acre. Your action group has gotten good at speedboats and the geography of oil rigs. There are 16-year-olds in Lima and Chennai and suburban Minneapolis desperate to say yes. Your numbers keep rising, but so does the carbon. It's a grim race to the end.

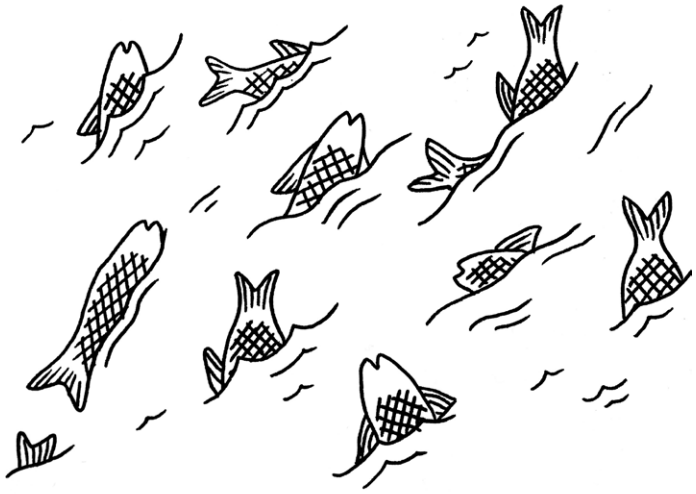
And from here the story is uncertain. I can't finish it. Only you can. Whatever work you are called to do, the world can wait no longer. Power in all its versions—the arrogant, the sadistic, the stupid—is poised to kill every last living being. If we falter, it will win. Gather your heart and all its courage; fletch love into an arrow that will not bend; and take aim.

Will you join me? The clock starts now, the moment you put down this book and think as hard as you've ever thought: who can I ask to join me? Our clock doesn't tick off seconds; it advances by species and carbon. How many and how much since you started this book? Will you join me?

In the time it takes to write that question, another amphibian has dropped into the abyss of extinction, another flower will never stretch and bloom, another native elder slips with her language from the world. And in the time it takes to say yes, there's still time to make the possible real. There is still time for amphibians as a class, still time for justice to win against power and its rancid pleasures of domination. Will you join me?

Yes is still possible. But yes, like love, needs to be a verb, our best and only hope. Let yes guide your aim.

Then let it loose.



Epilogue

Getting Started

As the saying goes, a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. The more ambitious and challenging the journey, the more daunting the first steps may seem, and bringing down civilization is definitely an ambitious undertaking.

Here is a not-even-remotely-exhaustive list of some (low-risk) entry points to the grand strategy, out of the thousands of options available. We've broken it down into aboveground and underground actions, but the lists are not mutually exclusive.

Initial Actions and Entry Points

Aboveground:

- Read or watch inspiring and informative media about resistance. Organize a movie night or series

of movie nights to watch films with others, and to discuss them and how they apply to action in the here and now.

- Make a list of the skills you want to learn. Prepare a schedule and set aside time each day or at least each week to learn and practice.

- Engage in prisoner support and general solidarity work. Writing to political prisoners is a good way of getting started. General solidarity work with various struggles is also a good way of getting experience, building alliances, and seeing different perspectives and methods of struggle.

- Be a distributor of propaganda. Pass on your favorite political books, movies, and other media to receptive friends and acquaintances.

- Start or join an affinity group for political action and mutual support. Develop long term goals and strategies. An affinity group can help you keep focused and accountable.

- Practice being interrogated. Take turns playing "police" and "activist" in an arrest situation. Remember that the police threaten, manipulate, and lie.

- Role play breaches of security culture.

- Go back to the lists of aboveground tactics in the previous chapter. Pick out something you want to do, plan it, and do it.

- Get your household prepared for when the grid crashes.

- Get to know your landbase and the other creatures who live on it. Spend some time in a relatively wild area near you.

- Build community sufficiency in your area.

- Mobilize people to undertake civil disobedience or related tactics for current struggles in your area. This will help build aboveground movements and train people in how to fight power. You will want as many allies as possible in your area for collapse.

Underground:

- Read the histories of successful and unsuccessful underground groups from the past century. Think about why they succeeded or failed, and what can be learned from them.

- As part of the above, study the challenging realities of life as part of an underground resistance cell, and consider whether it is something that you have the deep commitment and constitution to undertake.

- Practice keeping a low profile, and take measures to make yourself an inconspicuous candidate for underground activity. This also means disguising your social networks, and not using Facebook.

- Read over the section on recruitment and screening in the first part of the book. Consider ways to screen others and engage in mutual recruitment in your life.

- Form a "precautionary group," a group of trusted friends without a name or a mission statement who meet on a discreet basis to discuss, in general terms, the pros and cons of potential underground action.

- Study skills that would be relevant to underground groups but that are perfectly normal and legal to learn in general society. This might include computer encryption and codes, mechanics, first aid, and firearms safety.

- Practice self-discipline in general. Establishing regular training routines, and abstaining from drugs and alcohol, can be part of this.

- Learn basic survival skills and learn how to cope and improvise under difficult circumstances.

If you sympathize with what you've just read or are curious to find out more about Deep Green Resistance, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are a diverse, international group of activists. We come from different backgrounds and are involved with different levels of engagement, and have all found our common ground in working together to save life on earth.

Everyone and every type of talent has a role to play. Teachers, retirees, actors and hackers. We need it all.

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