

The radical or "root" problem is still the question of the administration of production. The questions of production for the commons, of production for use value and not exchange value in either software or cultural production or other cases of "exvestment" require the social and democratic allocation of labour, but in order to allocate this labour we have to be able to reproduce the workers themselves, have a way of agreeing on the collective administration of this labour and this necessarily relies on the material economy (food, housing, transport). Without some level of semi-autonomy in the material productive sphere for the reproduction of the worker we simply can not win - exvestment will be for capitalist purposes and prefigured for value creation when it occurs at all.

We need to be generating surpluses from production which can be allocated to general communist production - exvestment and investment (to increase productivity per unit labour which can be socially shared). Where does this happen? There are two potential answers, one is state and semi-state productive approaches and the other is cooperative federations for communist production. Both of these pose the question of how to manage "finance" democratically. The former - statist mode has the problem of claw-back after losing the state in democratic elections unless one takes on to engage in lightning expropriation. Lightning expropriation poses its own problems in that it leads almost necessarily to a revolutionary situation as well as a surround and conquer approach which will be taken by capitalists - unless seizure of the state has both huge public support and a significant productive capacity it will not succeed or will be highly undemocratic - but how to generate such massive public support without the productive capacity in the first place in order to engage in narrative formation?

If we take the second position of autonomous cooperative productive development in a communist and democratic direction then we can try to generate surpluses prior to and outside of state seizure preparing for such a seizure. The structure should attempt to be "scale free" allowing us to build up large capacity, internationally and ahead of state control - utilising our interventions in the state to help propel this dynamic and to avoid claw-back where possible against capitalists. We can use the surpluses to generate public support for the project helping to deal with the problem of ideological hegemony. State control can then be used more as a war of manoeuvre than a war of position - allowing expansion of the general sphere of non-commodity production in leaps when seized but also we can weather periods in which we do not have state power.

The real big questions for me are how to bootstrap such a process of

production outside of the state. These venture communist proposals seem structurally appealing but are not happening. How can we make them happen? Is it a real possibility or is it theoretically interesting but utopian? Why is it not already happening?

I also want to strongly defend the party form as the appropriate means of democratically arriving at proletarian programmes. While "parliamentary cretinism" has been a hallmark of many parties especially of the "social democratic" variety in recent times, the "new movements" do not pose a real possibility of exceeding the capacities of parties despite this. The failure to intervene in the state is simply failure - it is a bug and not a feature. The problems of "parliamentary cretinism" are real, but they must be counter-acted because it simply is not possible to go around the problem by giving up. They do not solve the problem of counter-politics or production. We need to overcome the antagonism to parties which has been generated by the current failures of parties.

Parties should return to the approach of party movements rather than electoralism without movements and as against movements without democratic formation of programme. That the state is deeply embedded in the capitalist mode of production does not excuse movements in some way as they can't in themselves supercede the state or capital either, but instead are not even able to demonstrate for themselves the levels of popular sentiment. 100k people in the streets is useful, but more useful when coupled with a party which demonstrates support from a large percentage of the population for a programme of forward movement. The party form is at base the collective democratic organisation of narrative formation and programmatic action. We should not dispense with democratic cooperative labour organisation of narrative formation and programmatic action.